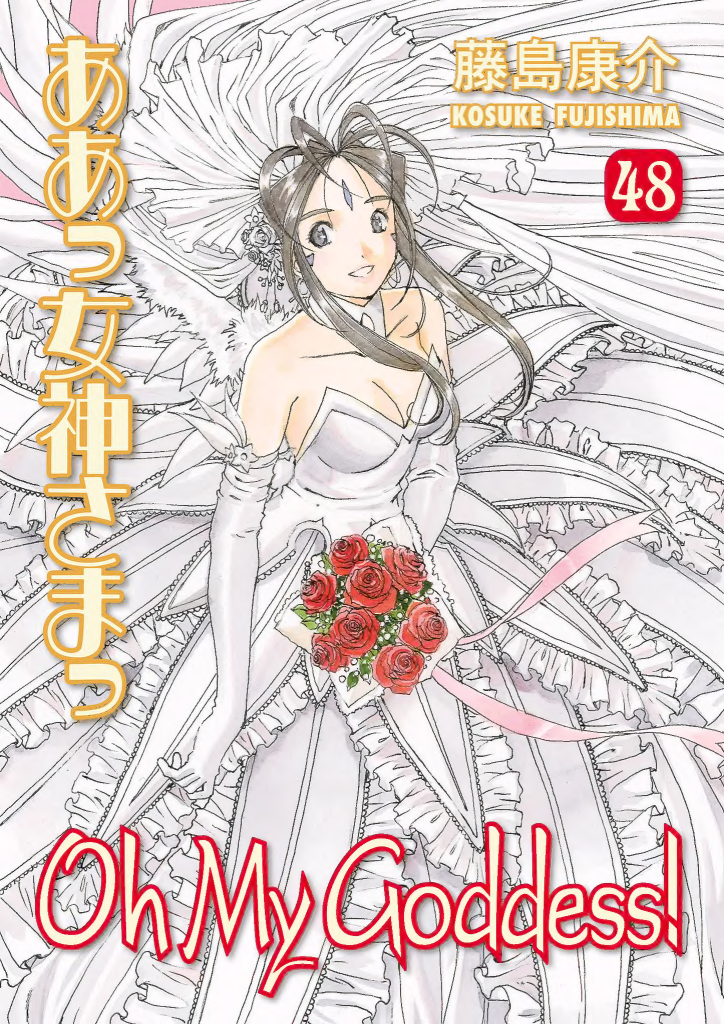
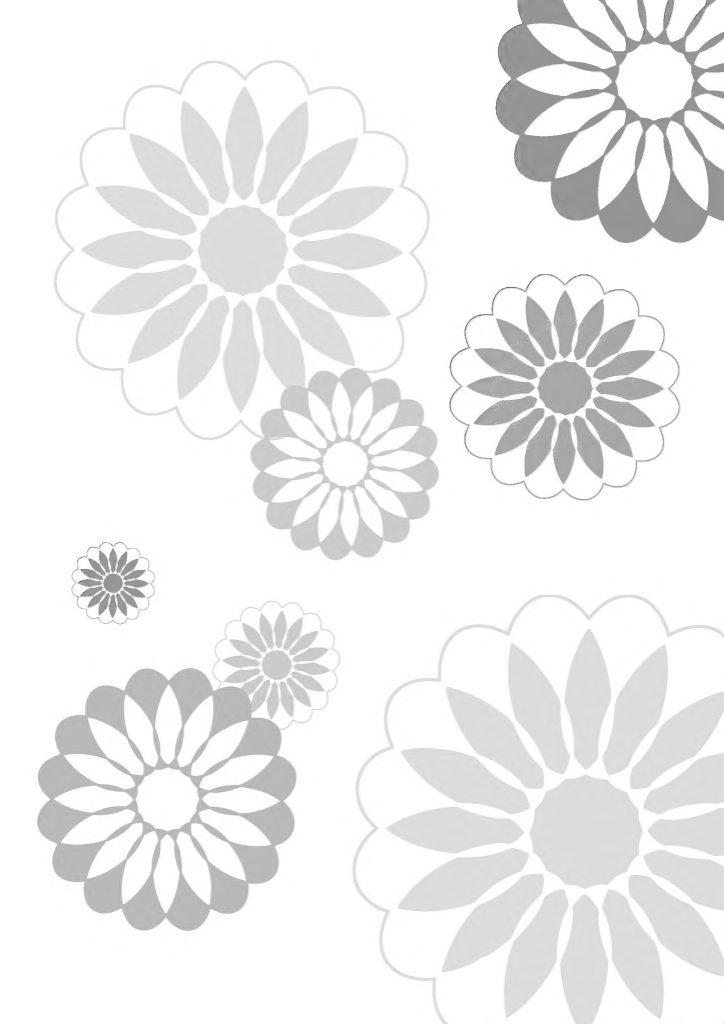
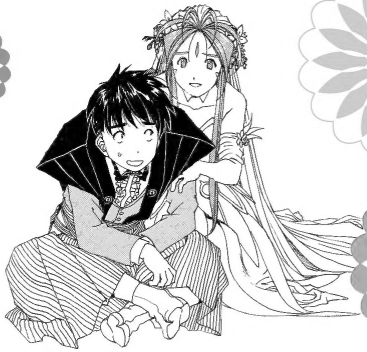

藤島康介
KOSUKE FUJISHIMA
48
ああっ女神さまっ
Oh My Goddess!



Oh My Goddess! 48

ああっ女神さまっ



STORY AND ART BY
Kosuke Fujishima

TRANSLATION BY
Dana Lewis and Christopher Lewis

LETTERING AND TOUCHUP BY
Susie Lee AND Betty Dong
WITH Tom2K

DARK HORSE MANGA

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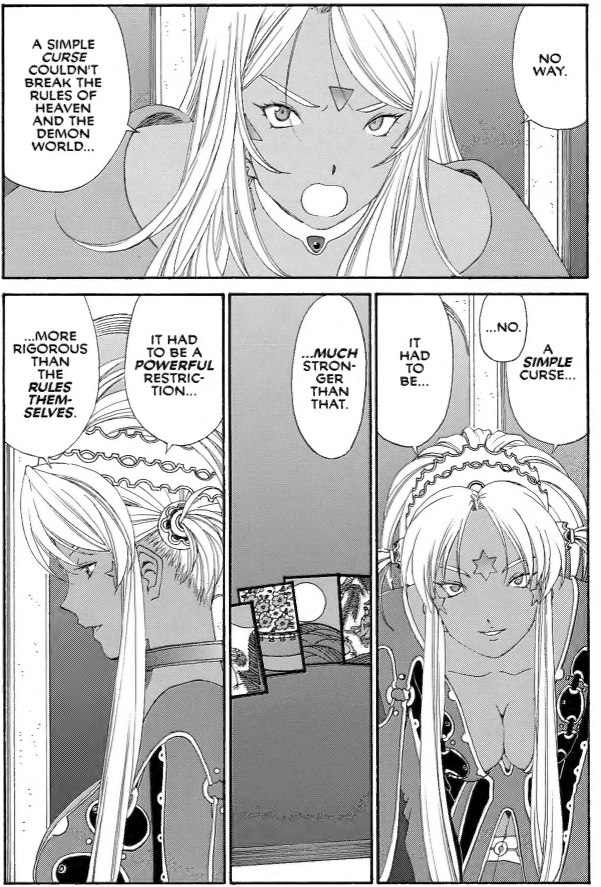
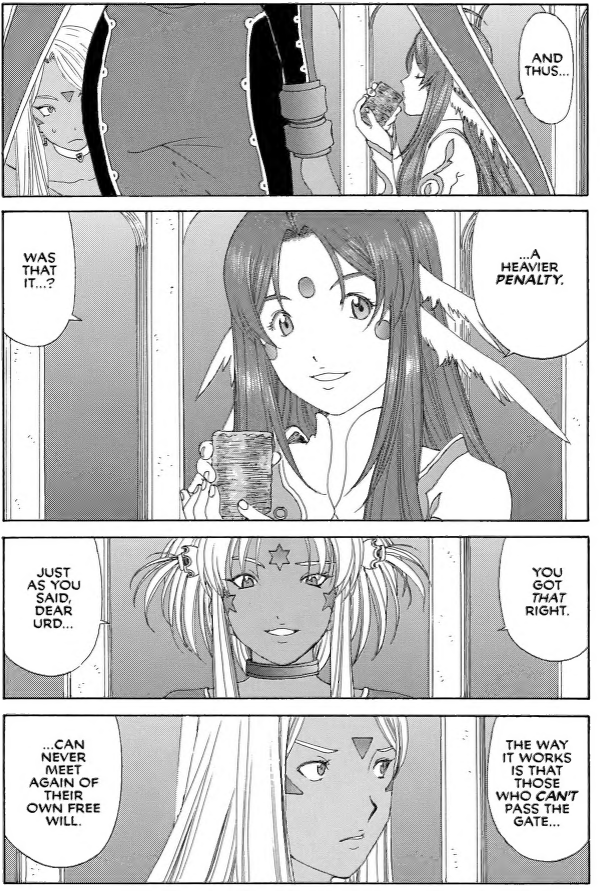
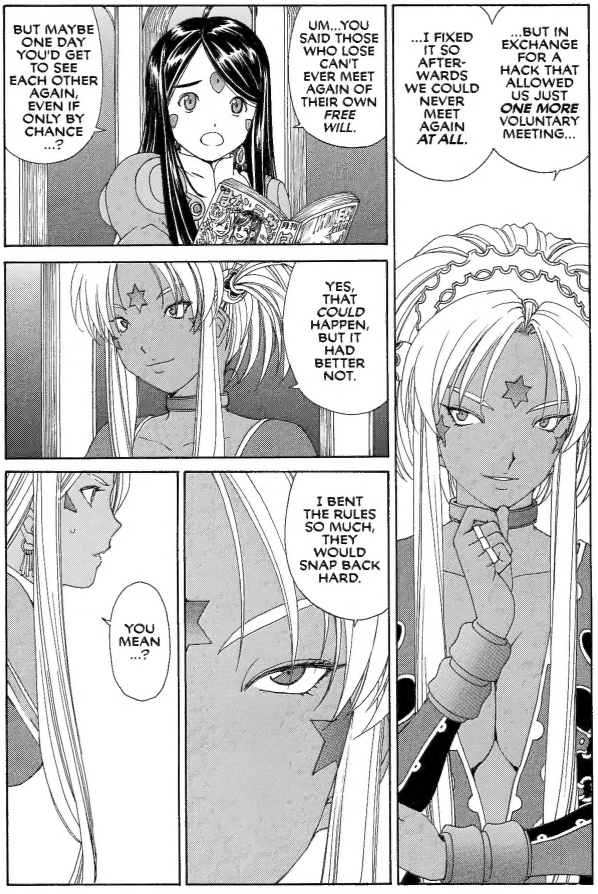
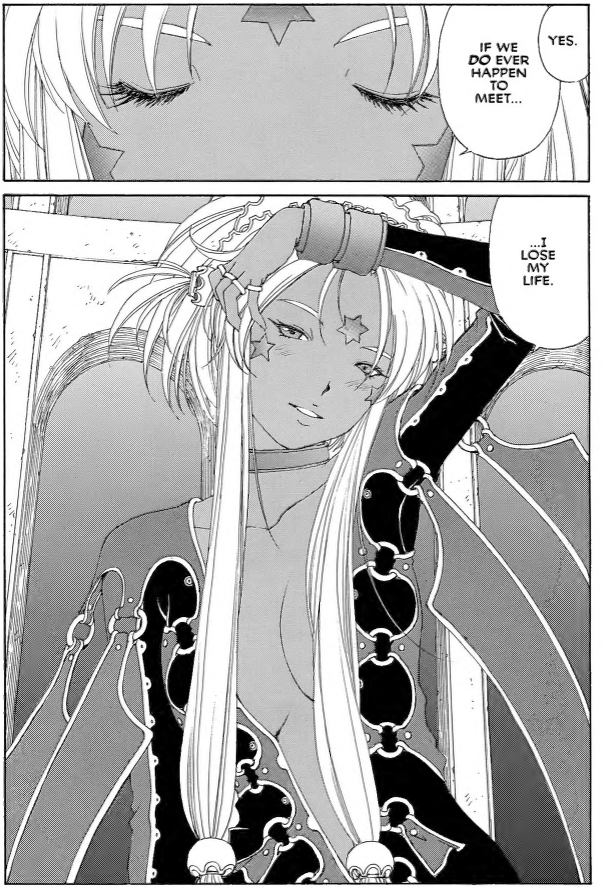
CHAPTER 303

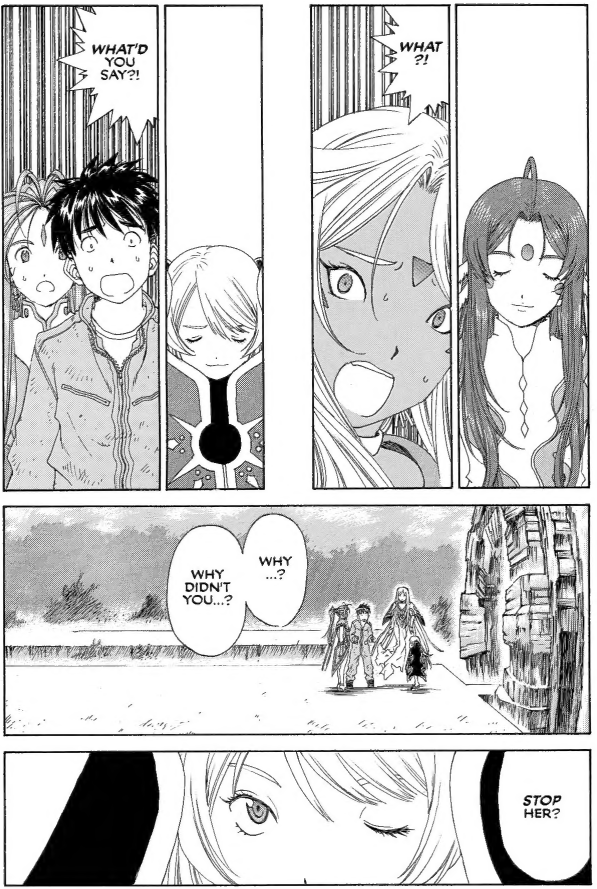
A Curse for Love


NO WAY.
A SIMPLE *CURSE* COULDN'T BREAK THE RULES OF HEAVEN AND THE DEMON WORLD...
...NO.
A *SIMPLE* CURSE...
IT HAD TO BE...
...*MUCH* STRONGER THAN THAT.
IT HAD TO BE A *POWERFUL* RESTRICTION...
...MORE RIGOROUS THAN THE *RULES THEMSELVES*.


AND THUS...
...A HEAVIER *PENALTY*.
WAS THAT IT...?
YOU GOT *THAT* RIGHT.
JUST AS YOU SAID, DEAR URD...
THE WAY IT WORKS IS THAT THOSE WHO *CAN'T* PASS THE GATE...
...CAN NEVER MEET AGAIN OF THEIR OWN FREE WILL.

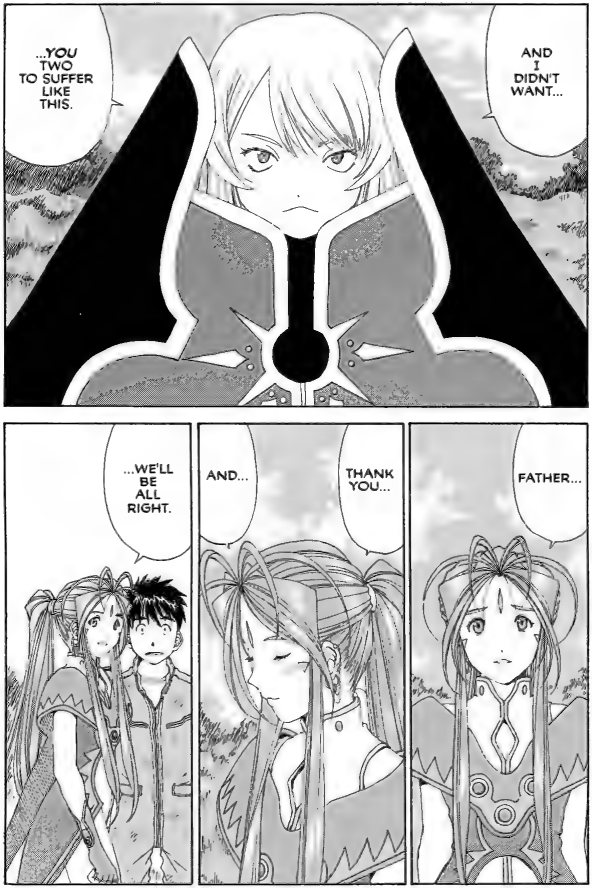

BUT MAYBE ONE DAY YOU'D GET TO SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN, EVEN IF ONLY BY CHANCE ...?
UM...YOU SAID THOSE WHO LOSE CAN'T EVER MEET AGAIN OF THEIR OWN FREE WILL.
...I FIXED IT SO AFTER-WARDS WE COULD NEVER MEET AGAIN AT ALL.
...BUT IN EXCHANGE FOR A HACK THAT ALLOWED US JUST ONE MORE VOLUNTARY MEETING...
YES, THAT COULD HAPPEN, BUT IT HAD BETTER NOT.
I BENT THE RULES SO MUCH, THEY WOULD SNAP BACK HARD.
YOU MEAN ...?


IF WE DO EVER HAPPEN TO MEET...
YES.
...I LOSE MY LIFE.


WHAT'D YOU SAY?!
WHAT?!
WHY...?
WHY DIDN'T YOU...?
STOP HER?

I WISH I COULD HAVE, BUT...
...WHEN SHE CAME TO ME THAT LAST TIME...SHE'D ALREADY GONE AHEAD AND SET THE CURSE UPON HERSELF.
OH...
...I SEE.
OF COURSE...
...SHE *CLAIMED* THE REASON WE COULD MEET ONCE MORE WAS BECAUSE...
I'VE TRANSFERRED TO HEAVEN.

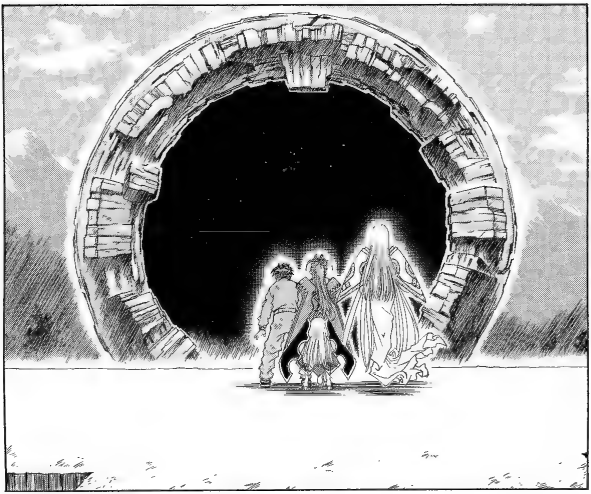
...SHE CAST A SPELL ON ME.
RIGHT?
YEAH... I COULD SEE HER DOING THAT.
NOT THAT EASILY, BUT...
WELL, I KNEW IT COULDN'T BE DONE...
BUT SHE WASN'T. AND I CAN NEVER SEE HILD AGAIN.
...SHE HAD BEEN TELLING ME THE TRUTH.
AND SOME-WHERE INSIDE, I MUST HAVE WISHED...
MY HEART MUST'VE BEEN OFF GUARD.

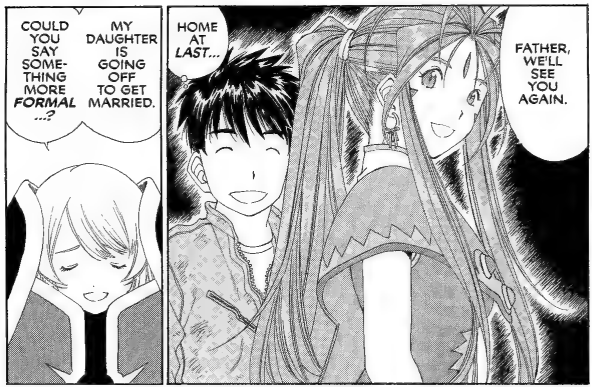

...YOU TWO TO SUFFER LIKE THIS.
AND I DIDN'T WANT...
...WE'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
AND...
THANK YOU...
FATHER...

BECAUSE YOU, FATHER...
AND THE GODDESS OF THE LAKE...
...ALL GAVE ME SOME-THING.
...AND ESPECIALLY KEIICHI...
...AND MOTHER AND URD AND SKULD...

LOVE AND COURAGE.
NICE...
...LOVE AND COURAGE.
OH! AND I MUSTN'T FOR-GET...
...PEORTH AND LIND...
...AND TAMIYA, AND OTAKI, AND HASE-GAWA, AND...
...

CHAK
GONGG
GONGG
GONGG
KACHINK
GAGONGG




COULD YOU SAY SOME-THING MORE *FORMAL* ...?
MY DAUGHTER IS GOING OFF TO GET MARRIED.
HOME AT *LAST*...
FATHER, WE'LL SEE YOU AGAIN.

DEAR FA-THER...
...THANK YOU FOR EVERY-THING.
!
...
?
I WILL LIVE IN HAPPINESS.

...IS THERE SOME-THING ELSE?
OH, MORI-SATO...
YEAH, YEAH. THAT'S MORE LIKE IT.
YOU REFUSED THE POWER OF THE GODS, BUT...
A TIME WILL COME WHEN...
...YOU'LL RETURN TO ME SEEKING IT.

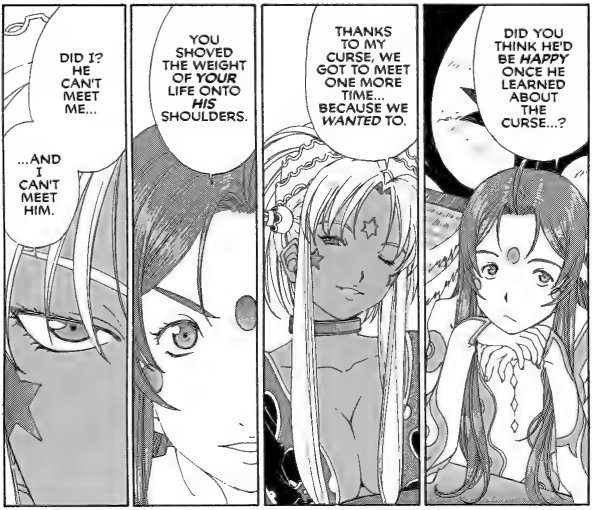
HA HA. I DON'T THINK SO.
THEY'RE GONE, AREN'T THEY.
YEP.
ARE YOU *CRYING*?
I AM *NOT* CRYING.

EH?
SHING
RIGHT. I'M THROUGH WITH THIS BODY...
...WATER'S COMING OUT OF MY EYES, YOU KNOW!
WHAT'S GOING ON, YOU KNOW ...?!
I'M NOT SURE HOW TO EXPLAIN ALL THIS...
AND WHY IS MY GATE OPEN ...?
AND WHO ARE YOU?

HMPH UNTIL YOU UNDER-STAND *THAT*...
WHY'D YOU GO SO FAR JUST TO MEET HIM AGAIN ?
I STILL DON'T GET IT.
...YOU'LL ALWAYS BE HALF A GODDESS.
THERE *IS* SOME LOVE YOU'D RISK YOUR LIFE FOR.
EEEK!! UNFORGIV-ABLE!!
I GET IT.

BUT WOULD I BE ABLE TO...?
HILD ACCOMPLISHED IT...
...OUT OF HER WILLPOWER.
BUT WILL I EVER BE ABLE TO LOVE...
...SOMEBODY LIKE THAT?
...

I HATE.
AND THAT'S THE PART OF YOU.
OH, YEAH?
IT'S JUST SO SELF-CENTERED.


DID I? HE CAN'T MEET ME...
...AND I CAN'T MEET HIM.
YOU SHOVED THE WEIGHT OF *YOUR* LIFE ONTO *HIS* SHOULDERS.
THANKS TO MY CURSE, WE GOT TO MEET ONE MORE TIME... BECAUSE WE *WANTED* TO.
DID YOU THINK HE'D BE *HAPPY* ONCE HE LEARNED ABOUT THE CURSE...?

BECAUSE IT WASN'T ENOUGH FOR THE SYSTEM THAT WE LOVED EACH OTHER!
DON'T YOU KNOW HOW HE SUFFERS, KNOWING IF YOU MET YOU WOULD--

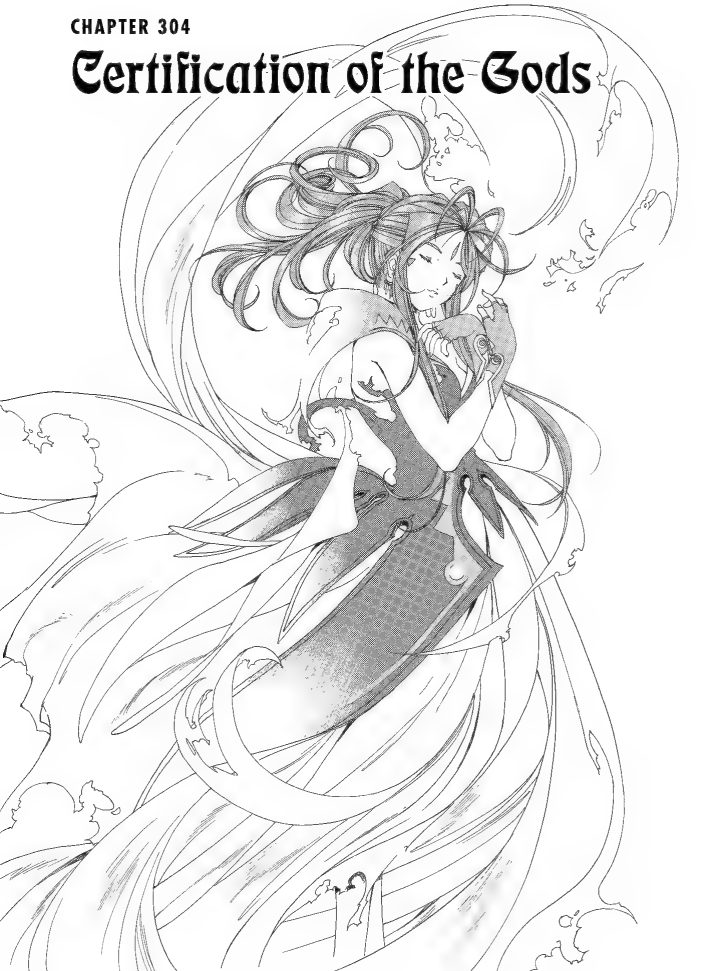
...IF IT'S THE LAST THING I EVER DO!!
THAT'S WHY I'M GONNA *DESTROY* THIS STUPID SYSTEM...
YOU DID ONE GOOD THING.
WELL, I AM ONE, YOU KNOW.
SPOKEN LIKE A TRUE DEMON

HUH?
YOU GAVE BIRTH TO DEAR URD HERE.
HUH ...?
YEAH, THAT WAS GOOD, WASN'T IT...?
I CAN'T TELL WHO'S MORE AGGRESSIVE, MOM OR HILD...
...OF COURSE, THE REST OF YOU IS AWFUL.
THAT'S RIGHT! SO GIVE THANKS...
SHE WOULDN'T EXIST WITHOUT YOUR RECKLESS, SELF-CENTERED RULE BREAKING.

...HAVE JUST RETURNED.
...THAT YOU *CAN* BEAT THE SYSTEM HEAD ON...
AND BESIDES, TWO WHO JUST PROVED...
WE'RE *BACK* ...!

CHAPTER 304

Certification of the Gods



UM, HI...
grrr
THANK GOOD-NESS YOU'RE OKAY...
BELL-DANDY !!

DUMMY.
THANK GOODNESS YOU'RE BACK, TOO.
WELL, ACTUALLY, I WAS THE ONE IN DANGER...
HOW DARE YOU PUT HER IN DANGER...
RIGHT, RIGHT. ANYWAY, IT'S OKAY NOW.
HOW DARE YOU PUT YOURSELF IN DANGER!!
UM... BECAUSE... IT WOULD BREAK MY BIG SISTER'S HEART!!
EH ...?
WELCOME BACK, MY DEAR KEIICHI.

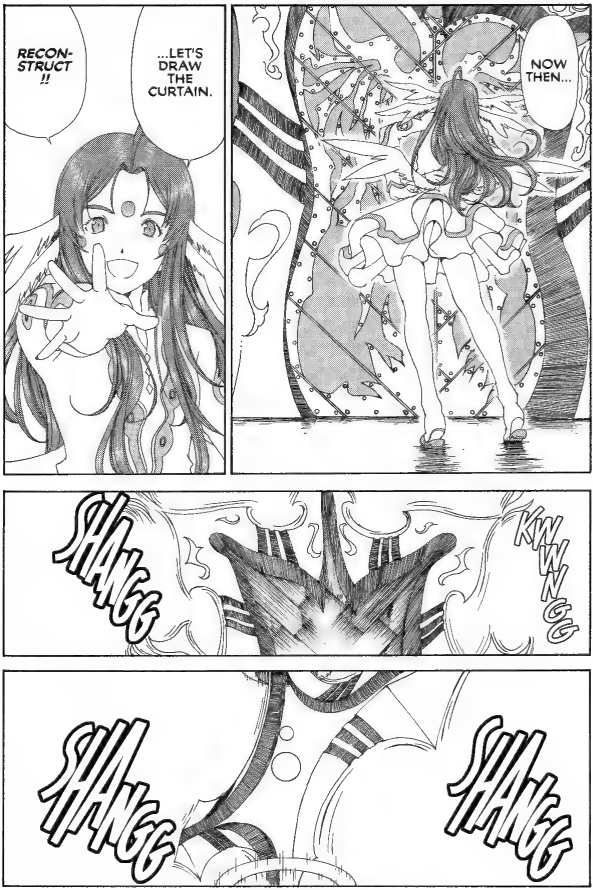
I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D REALLY...
...MAKE ...IT ...??
YES?
YOU *MET* HIM...
...DIDN'T YOU?
UH... YEAH, I *DID*...
...BUT HOW'D YOU *KNOW* ...?

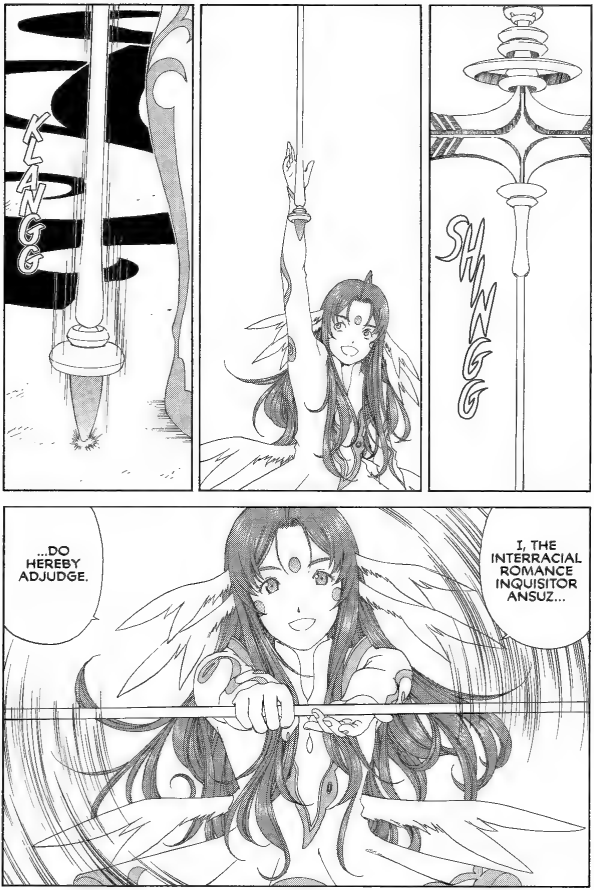
...YOU SMELL LIKE HIM!!
AH, THAT MAN'S SCENT...

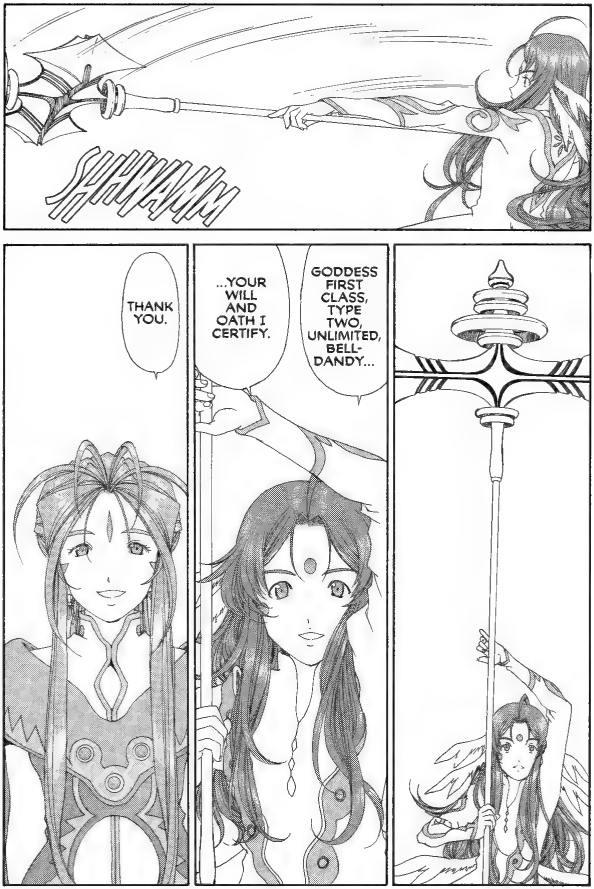
FN OOM
KYAAA!
OH, DEAR, BELL-DANDY.
ARE YOU STILL DOING THAT ...?
YIKES ...!
FSSHH

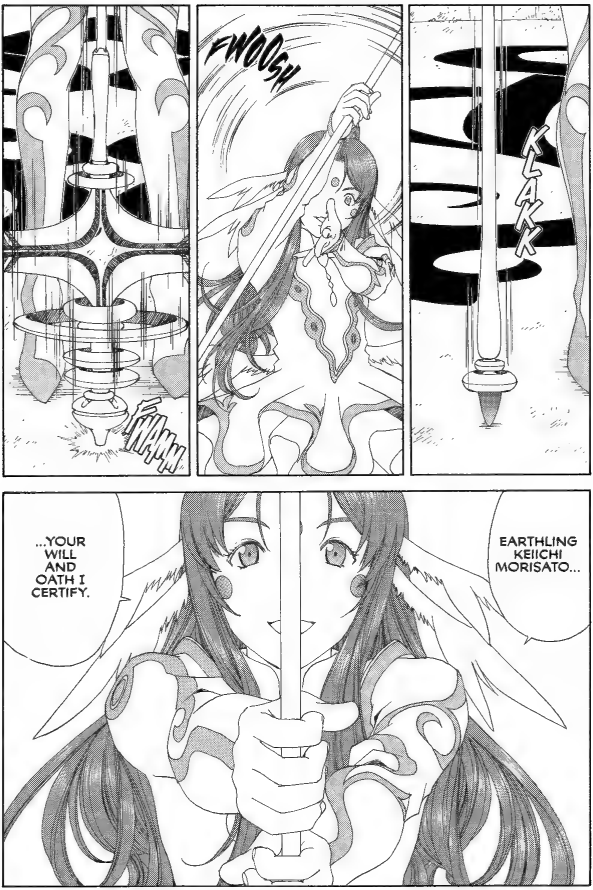
OKAY.
STOP PLAYING WITH MY DAUGHTER.
...HIS SCENT IS ON YOU TOO...
HE'S DOING JUST FINE.
YES.
WAS HE DOING ALL RIGHT?
SO.

REALLY?
GOOD.
THAT FACE...
...SO SHE CAN SHOW IT, TOO.
WHETHER DEMONS OR GODS...
...IF THEY FEEL THAT WAY FOR SOME-ONE...

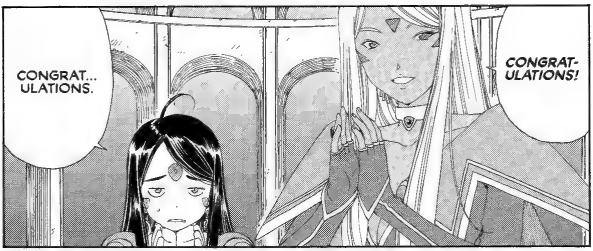

RECON-STRUCT !!
...LET'S DRAW THE CURTAIN.
NOW THEN...
SHANGG
KWWNGG
SHANGG
SHANGG

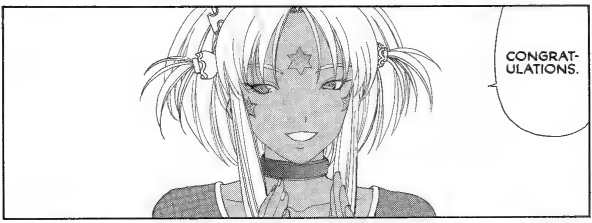

KLANG
SHWNGG
I, THE INTERRACIAL ROMANCE INQUISITOR ANSUZ...
...DO HEREBY ADJUDGE.

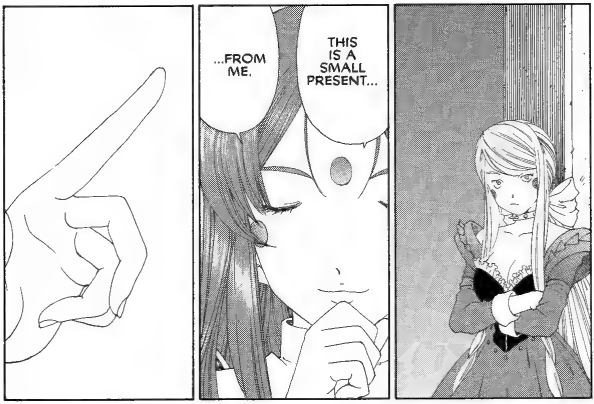

SHUWAAAA
GODDESS FIRST CLASS, TYPE TWO, UNLIMITED, BELL-DANDY...
...YOUR WILL AND OATH I CERTIFY.
THANK YOU.


FWOOSH
KAKK
...YOUR WILL AND OATH I CERTIFY.
EARTHLING KEIICHI MORISATO...

MAY LIGHT SHINE UPON THE FUTURE OF YOU BOTH.


CONGRAT...
ULATIONS.
CONGRAT-
ULATIONS!


CONGRAT-
ULATIONS.


...FROM
ME.
THIS
IS A
SMALL
PRESENT...

TYPE NINE PURPLE TREASURE CLASS CEREMONIAL DRESS...
...FITTING PERMISSION AUTHORIZED!
FWPD

WOW ...!

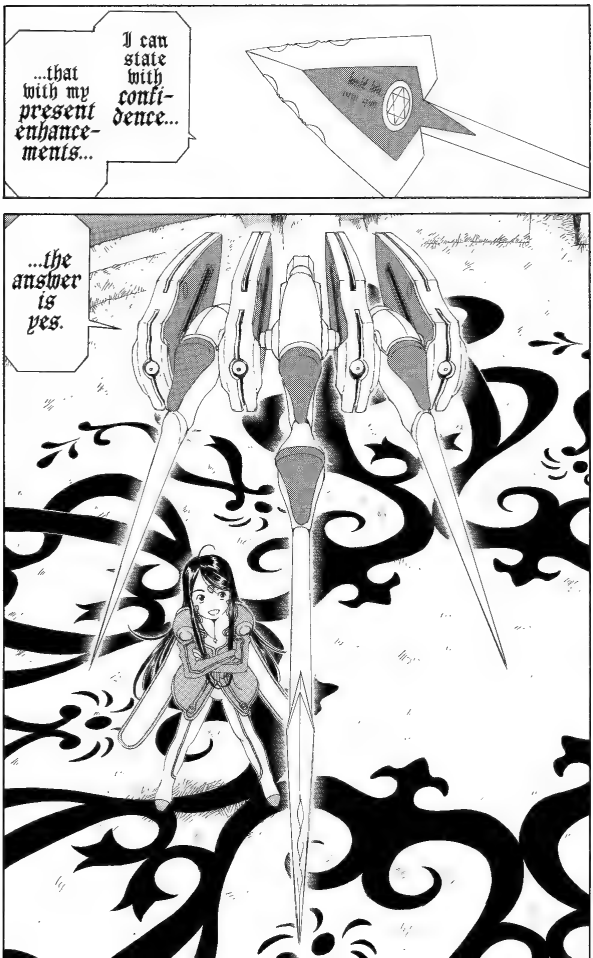
OH, WOW...
YES.
NICE, ISN'T IT...?
NOW I MAY AS WELL DRESS...
...KEIICHI, DEAR.
UM...
WAAH!!

...EH?
OH C'MON...
EVEN I KNOW WITH A WEDDING DRESS LIKE THAT...
...THE GROOM NEEDS A TAILCOAT.
...EH?
POOF!
WAIT! LET'S GIVE HIM A KAMISHIMO TOP, LIKE A SAMURAI!

...EHHHH?!
...BUT ISN'T YOUR TIME *RUNNING* OUT...?
UMM, SORRY TO INTERRUPT...
...HOW ABOUT SOME PARTY GLASSES ...?
AND LET'S DO HIS HAIR IN A TOP-KNOT...

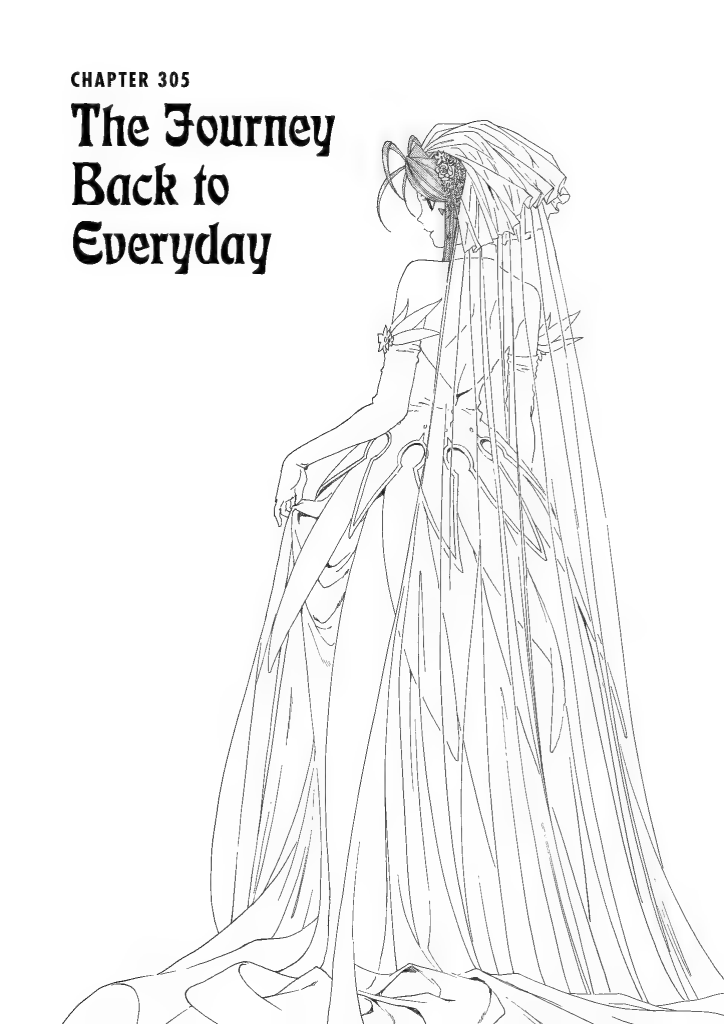
ABOUT 25 MINUTES... I THINK.
HUH. HOW LONG DID IT TAKE TO GET HERE?
WE'VE ONLY GOT 18 MINUTES LEFT TO GET BACK TO EARTH!!
HO HO HO!
WE'RE FIN-ISHED!! WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT!!
DON'T PRETEND YOU HADN'T FORGOTTEN ABOUT IT TOO!
...HOW CLEVERLY I MADE YOU FORGET ABOUT THE TIME...
YOU FELL FOR MY LITTLE DISTRACTION WITH THE CLOTHES...

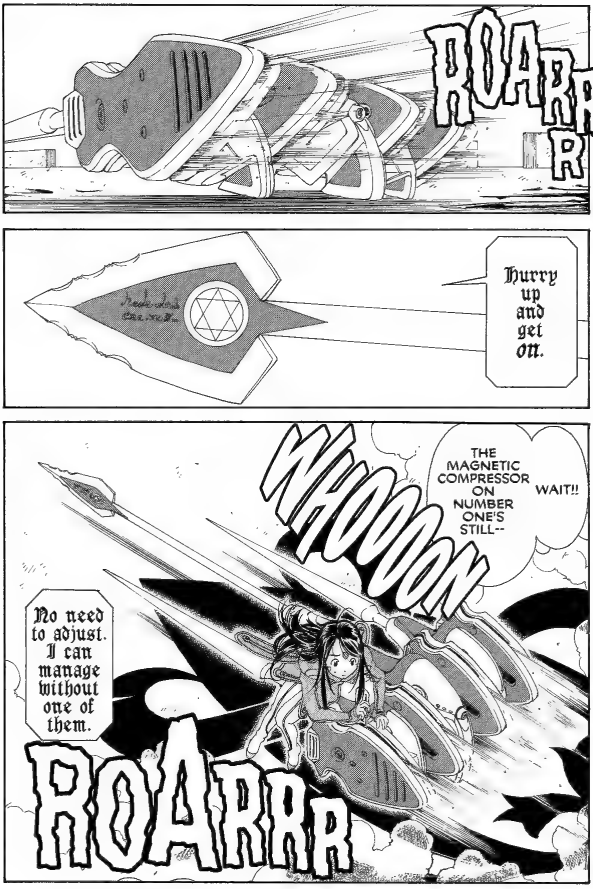
YOU *ALSO* JUST FORGOT ABOUT IT...!
YES! EVEN, UH, *I*, ANSUZ, WAS *DECEIVED* ...!
EH? *HOW?*
IT'LL BE FINE.
...CAN YOU MAKE IT IN TIME...?
HMPH. OKAY BY *ME*, BUT...
...to return these trouble-some people to the human world at once.
Mistress Hild. I request permis-sion...
OH...


I can state with confidence...
...that with my present enhancements...
...the answer is yes.

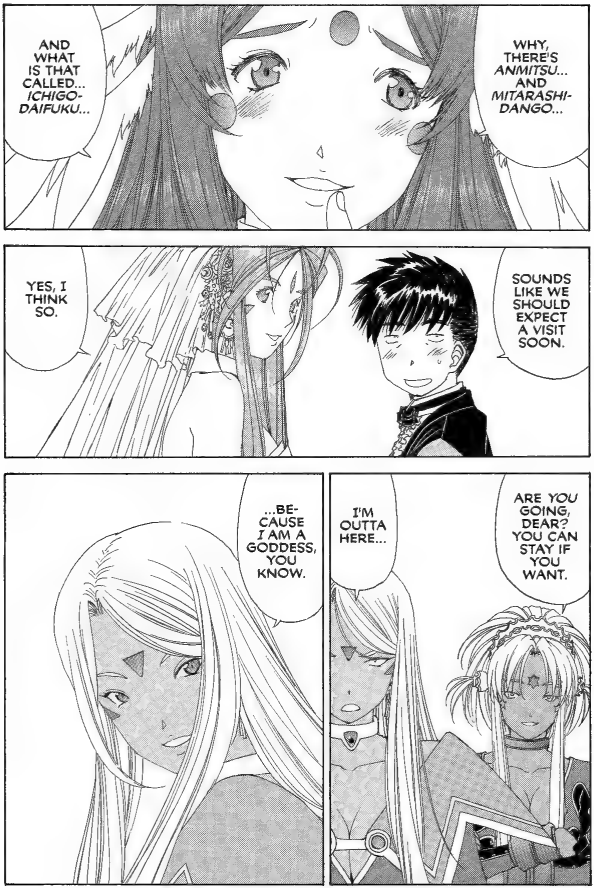
CHAPTER 305

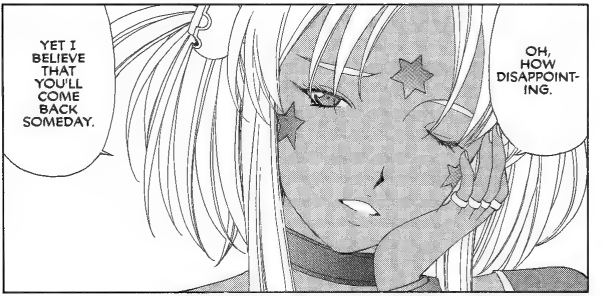
The Journey Back to Everyday

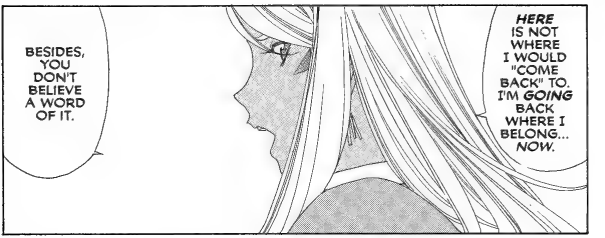


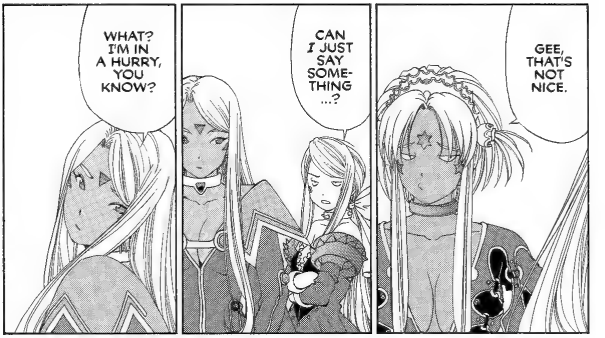

ROARRR
Hurry up and get on.
WHOOOOM
THE MAGNETIC COMPRESSOR ON NUMBER ONE'S STILL--
WAIT!!
No need to adjust. I can manage without one of them.
ROARRR

...MOTHER, PLEASE COME VISIT US IN THE HUMAN WORLD!
HURRY, HURRY ...!
...ABOUT THE SWEETS YOU HAVE DOWN THERE...
I'VE HEARD SO MUCH...
OF COURSE!

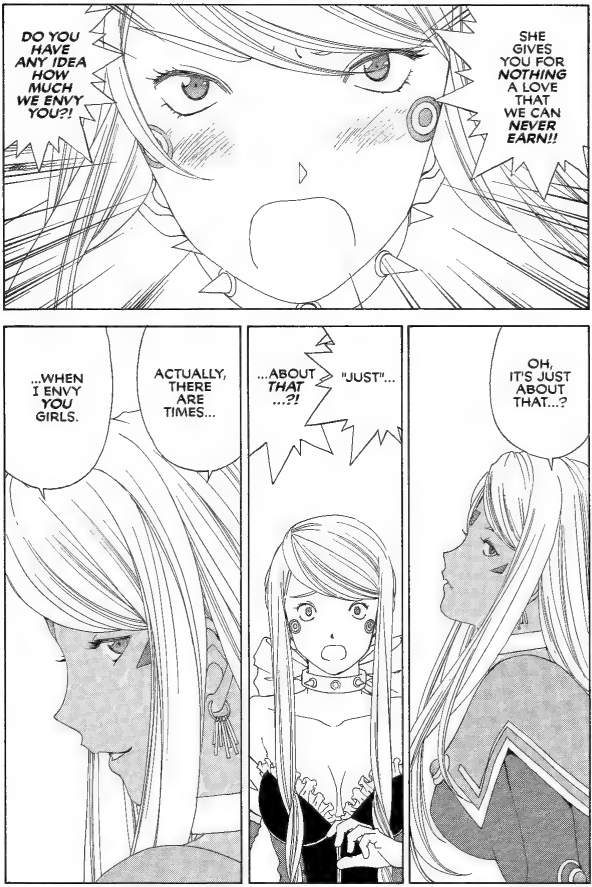

AND WHAT IS THAT CALLED... ICHIGO-DAIFUKU...
WHY, THERE'S ANMITSU... AND MITARASHI-DANGO...
YES, I THINK SO.
SOUNDS LIKE WE SHOULD EXPECT A VISIT SOON.
...BE-CAUSE I AM A GODDESS, YOU KNOW.
I'M OUTTA HERE...
ARE YOU GOING, DEAR? YOU CAN STAY IF YOU WANT.


OH, HOW DISAPPOINT-ING.
YET I BELIEVE THAT YOU'LL COME BACK SOMEDAY.


HERE IS NOT WHERE I WOULD "COME BACK" TO. I'M *GOING* BACK WHERE I BELONG... *NOW.*
BESIDES, YOU DON'T BELIEVE A WORD OF IT.


GEE, THAT'S NOT NICE.
CAN *I* JUST SAY SOME-THING ...?
WHAT? I'M IN A HURRY, YOU KNOW?

YOU SHOULDN'T BE SO ARROGANT...
...JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE MISTRESS HILD'S *DAUGHTER.*
ARROGANT?
HOW *SO?*
ALWAYS ACTING OUT TOWARD MISTRESS HILD LIKE THAT.
WE *LONG* FOR MISTRESS HILD'S LOVE...
...AND *YOU* CAST IT INTO THE SEWER.


DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH WE ENVY YOU?!
SHE GIVES YOU FOR NOTHING A LOVE THAT WE CAN NEVER EARN!!
OH, IT'S JUST ABOUT THAT...?
"JUST"...
...ABOUT THAT ...?!
ACTUALLY, THERE ARE TIMES...
...WHEN I ENVY YOU GIRLS.

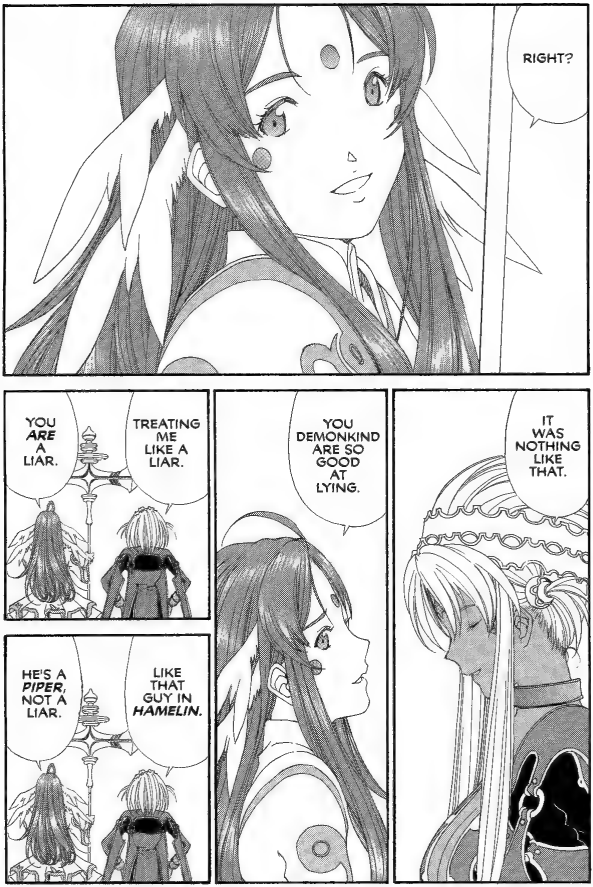
...?
OKAY! HERE I COME...
...EH? I DON'T...
Hey! Are you coming or not?!
I WISH I COULD SPEND AS MUCH TIME WITH HER AS YOU CAN.
YOU TAKE IT FOR GRANTED, BEING AROUND MOM.

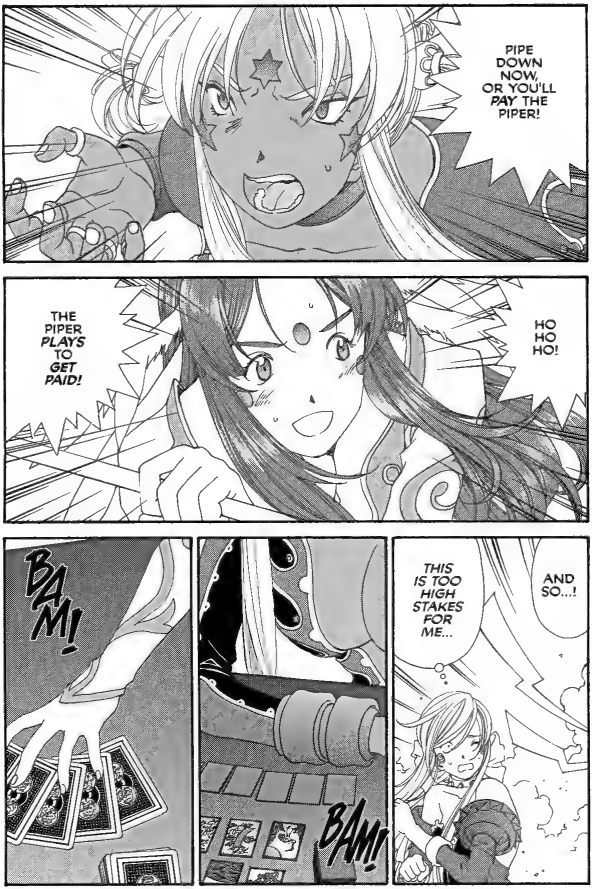
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.
...
...
Hang on!!
We're going now!!

...OUCH !!
FWOOM
HOW DARE YOU...!
HEY!!

WOW...
...THAT SPEED'S JUST RIDICU-LOUS.
WHAT?
CAN I ASK A QUESTION ...?
LEAVE ME BEHIND, WILL YOU ...?!

WHY DID YOU LET URD BE RAISED AS A GODDESS ...?
WELL, OF COURSE...
I...
YOU WANTED TO LEAVE HIM A SYMBOL OF YOUR LOVE...
...IT MERELY AMUSED ME.
WHAT OTHER REASON WOULD I HAVE?
...COULD THINK OF ONE.


RIGHT?
IT WAS NOTHING LIKE THAT.
YOU DEMONKIND ARE SO GOOD AT LYING.
TREATING ME LIKE A LIAR.
YOU *ARE* A LIAR.
LIKE THAT GUY IN *HAMELIN*.
HE'S A *PIPER*, NOT A LIAR.

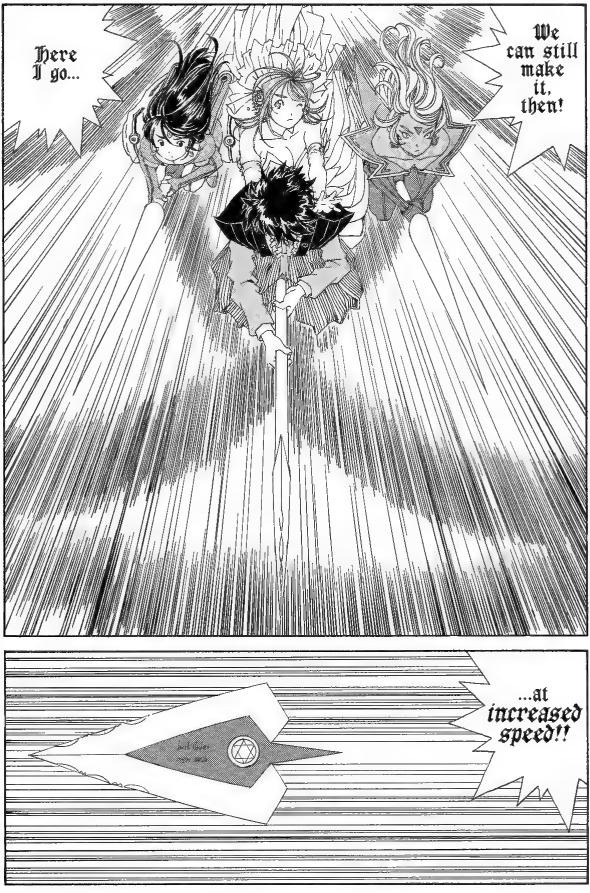

PIPE DOWN NOW, OR YOU'LL *PAY* THE PIPER!
HO HO HO!
THE PIPER *PLAYS* TO *GET PAID!*
AND SO...!
THIS IS TOO HIGH STAKES FOR ME...
BAM!
BAM!

ALL RIGHT!!
HELL YEAH!!
INO-SHIKA-CHO!! THAT'S TWENTY-FIVE MON!!
GO-KO!! AKA-TAN! AO-TAN!!
OH, YES? WELL, I'VE GOT A ROYAL STRAIGHT FLUSH!!

WHICH IS STRONGER?
NO IDEA.
AND SHOULDN'T YOU BE GETTING BACK TO HEAVEN ...?
AWW!
FWWW

You'd better put up a shield!
WE WILL!!
HOW FAST ARE WE GOING?!
IT'S HARD EVEN TO BREATHE!!
WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT...?!
HAHH HAHH
DO YOU KNOW HOW HARD IT WAS FOR ME TO CATCH UP...?!

WISE-GUY BROOM! I'LL TAKE YOU APART..
Ha Ha Ha! But you did catch up.
Sur-prised me a little, actually.
DON'T TOUCH HIM, OKAY ...?
THE SETTINGS ARE REALLY DELICATE RIGHT NOW...
KEIICHI!! HOW MUCH TIME LEFT...?!
EIGHT MINUTES AND... 20 SECONDS !!

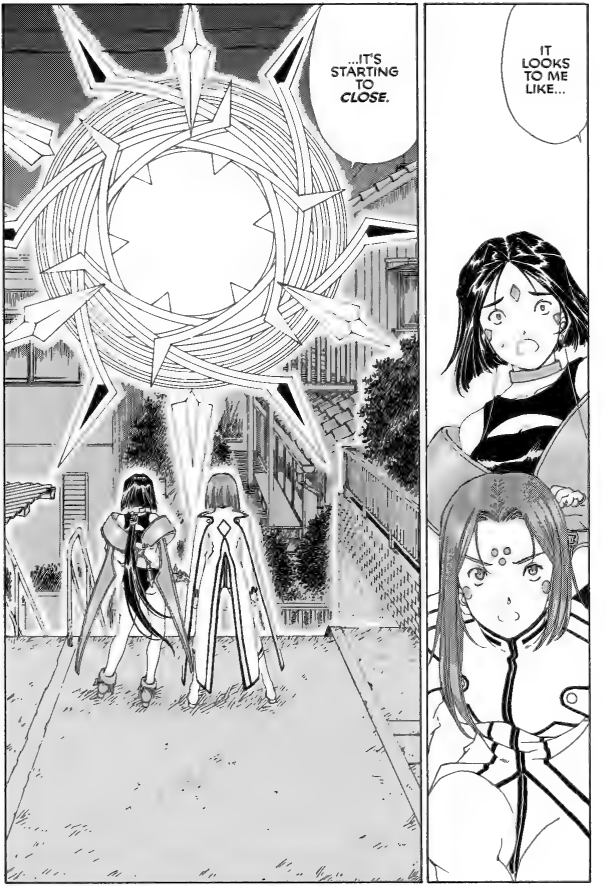

Here I go...
We can still make it, then!
...at increased speed!!

EH?!
VWOOMM
EEEYAAA!!
Earth
Same time

THAMM
...LOOKS LIKE WE'VE TAKEN THEM ALL OUT.
IT DOES SEEM LIKE IT.
AHH...
...THINGS GOT A BIT DIS-ARRAYED, THOUGH.

I'D BETTER MAKE REPAIRS...
SINCE THESE STOPPED APPEARING... I SUPPOSE IT'S ALL BEEN SETTLED IN THE DEMON WORLD...?
UM... NO.
HMM... LET ME HELP, TOO!

...AT LEAST SHE'S OBEDIENT.
UNDER-STOOD.
THEY MIGHT BE BACK ANYTIME NOW. WHY NOT KEEP A WATCH ON THE GATE...?!
NO. NO. THANK YOU ANYWAY.
IF I'M NOT MISTAK-EN...
WHAT? I REALLY DON'T NEED HELP...
PEORTH...


...IT'S STARTING TO *CLOSE.*
IT LOOKS TO ME LIKE...

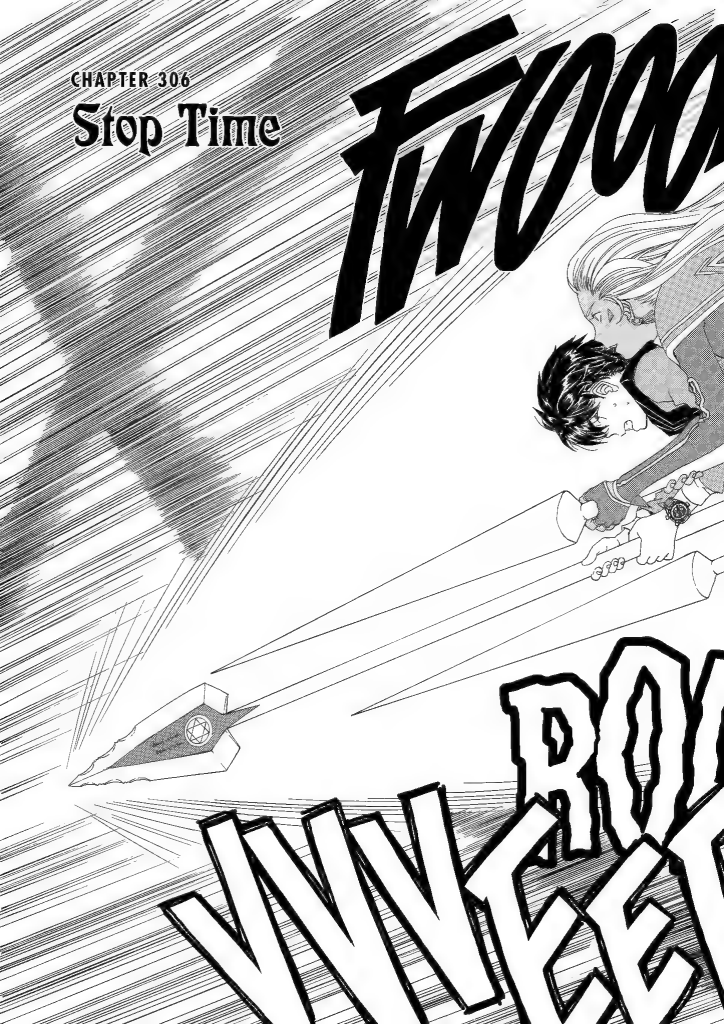
OH MY GODDESS!

WOOOM
ROARR
WHIRRRR

EEERRRRD
EEEEEEE

CHAPTER 306

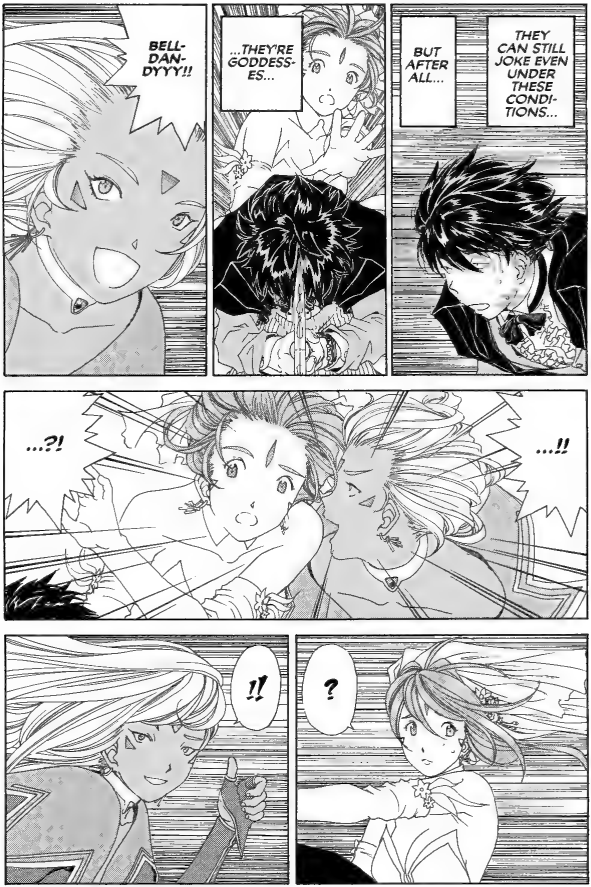
Stop Time



ROAR
I'VE DRIVEN INTO THE WIND ON MY BIKE COUNTLESS TIMES...
...I SHOULD BE USED TO HOW IT FEELS.
BUT THIS IS BEYOND WIND...
...IT'S VIOLENCE.

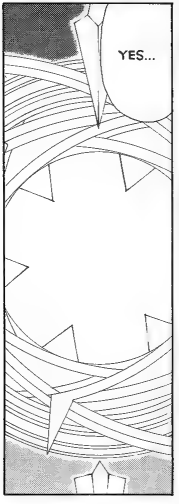
A TORRENT OF VIOLENCE...
EVEN WITH BELLDANDY MAKING A SHIELD...
AND YET IN THE MIDST OF IT...
I CAN BARELY BREATHE...
MY HANDS ARE GOING NUMB...

THESE GODDESSES ...!
SHE CANNA TAKE THE STRAIN, CAPTAIN!!
No time for that. You'll just have to fix it!
SLOW DOWN A BIT!!
ENGINE THREE'S ACTING UP!!

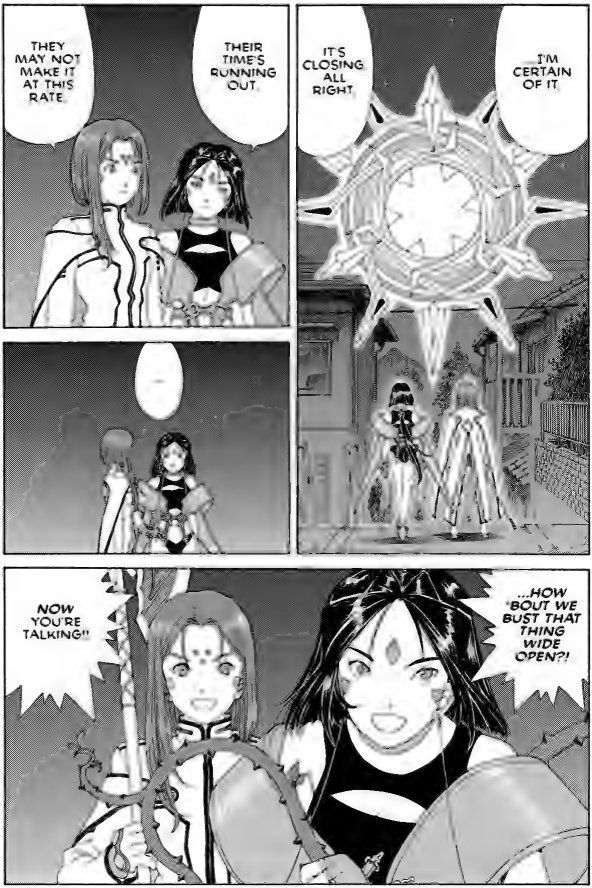

BELL-DAN-DYYY!!
...THEY'RE GODDESS-ES...
BUT AFTER ALL...
THEY CAN STILL JOKE EVEN UNDER THESE CONDI-TIONS...
...?!
...!!
!!
?

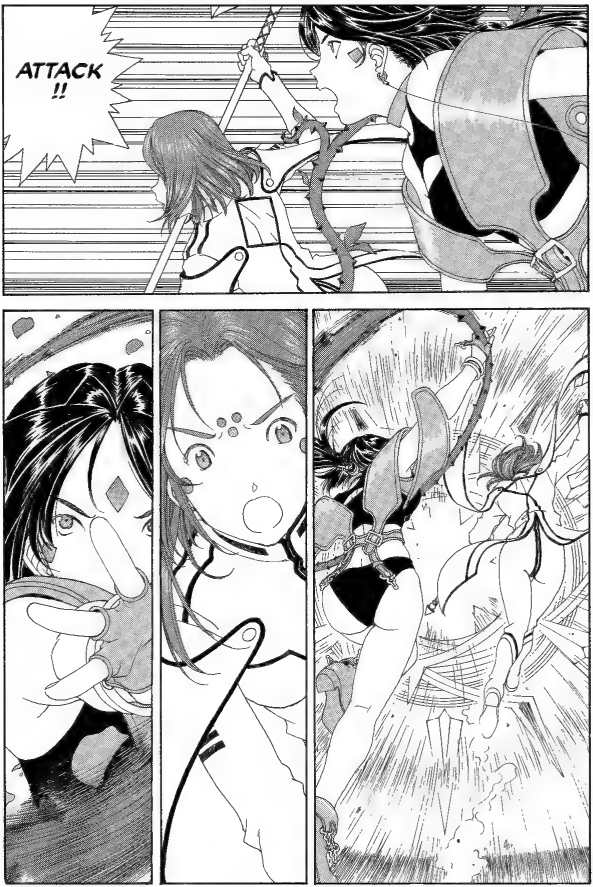
...?
...DARLING !!
HOLD ON...
DAR ...!!
LI ...!!
...NG !!
DAR ...!!
LI ...!!
...NG !!
DAR ...!!
...NG !!
LI ...!!

YOU BET I'LL HOLD ON!!
DARLING
DARLING
DARLING

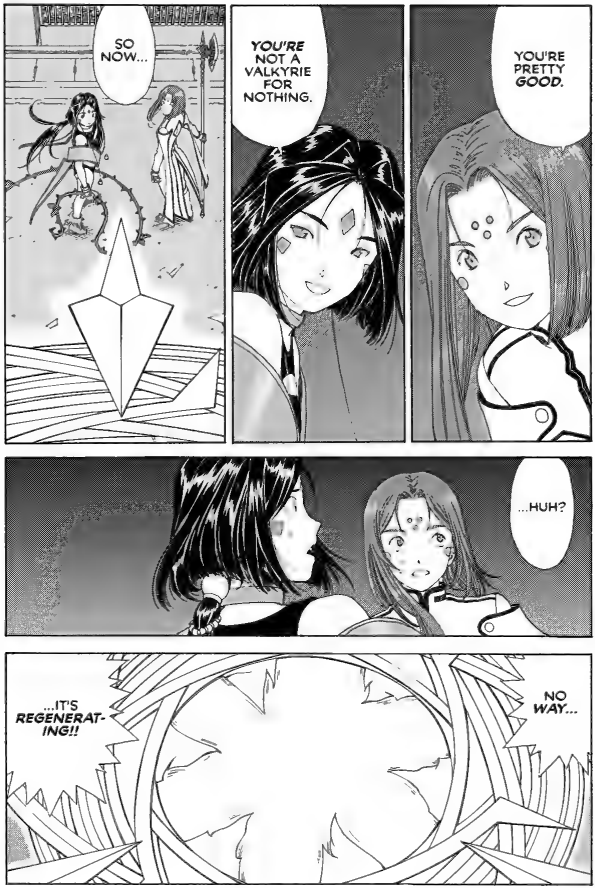

YES...

Quit screaming, mortal, or I'll dump you!!
EEE-YAA-AA!!

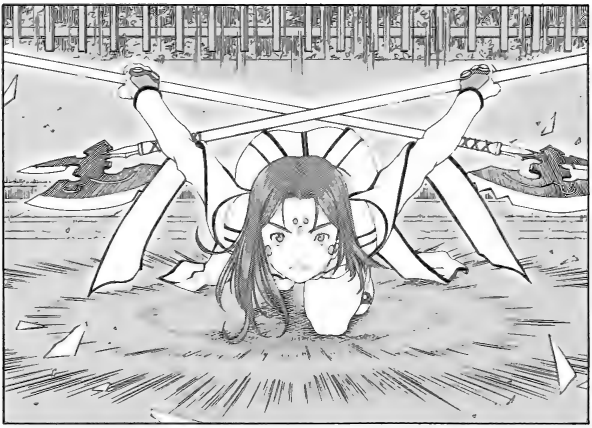

THEY MAY NOT MAKE IT AT THIS RATE.
THEIR TIME'S RUNNING OUT.
IT'S CLOSING ALL RIGHT.
I'M CERTAIN OF IT.
...
NOW YOU'RE TALKING!!
...HOW 'BOUT WE BUST THAT THING WIDE OPEN?!

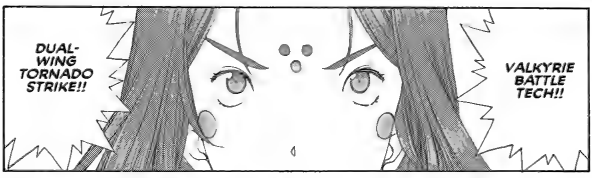

ATTACK
!!

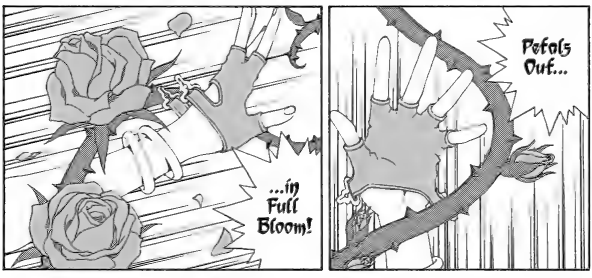
KLANGG


SO NOW...
YOU'RE NOT A VALKYRIE FOR NOTHING.
YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD.
...HUH?
...IT'S REGENERATING!!
NO WAY...

WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT IT COULD DO THAT...?
WHAT SHALL WE DO...?!
WHY, NATURALLY...
...WE SMASH IT EVERY TIME IT GROWS BACK!!
I GUESS...
...THAT'S ALL WE CAN DO.




DUAL-WING TORNADO STRIKE!!
VALKYRIE BATTLE TECH!!

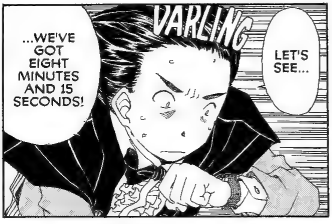

...in Full Bloom!
Petals Out...

...Rose-Colored Whirlwind!!
WWOOM
Keiichi...

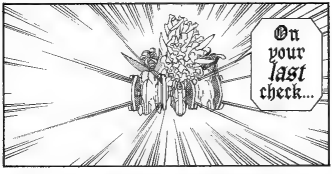
...Give me another time check!
DARLING
HE MUST BE REALLY HAPPY...

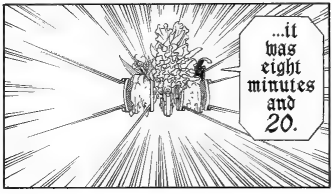
BREITLING GENEVE CHRONOMETRE
CHRONO-MATIC

WHAT?
DARLIN

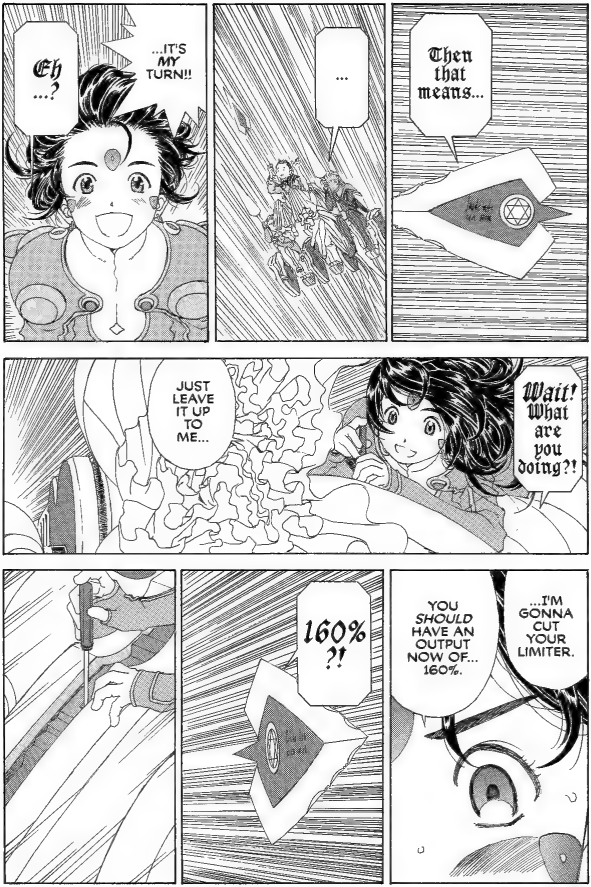

...WE'VE GOT EIGHT MINUTES AND 15 SECONDS!
DARLING
LET'S SEE...

BREITLING GENEVE CHRONOMETRE
CHRONO-MATIC


On your last check...


...it was eight minutes and 20.

DA
NG
UM...
IT...
Eh?
...IT STOPPED...
What stopped?
RIGHT!! THE WATCH! I FORGOT THAT IT ISN'T AUTO-MATIC...
...IT'S HAND WOUND !!


Eh ...?
...IT'S MY TURN!!
...
Then that means...
Wait! What are you doing?!
JUST LEAVE IT UP TO ME...
...I'M GONNA CUT YOUR LIMITER.
YOU SHOULD HAVE AN OUTPUT NOW OF... 160%.
160% ?!

Stop!
Stop!!
I'm going to break--
FWOOOOM

...IT'LL VANISH ENTIRELY ONCE IT'S CLOSED, WON'T IT?
WE'VE SHATTERED IT TEN TIMES AT LEAST...
IT GROWS BACK NO MATTER WHAT

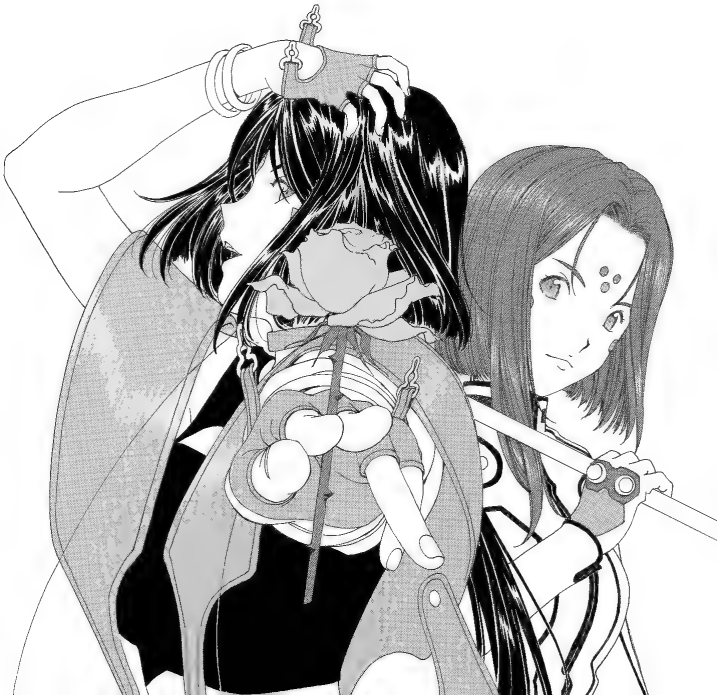
RRRROARR
WHAT'S THAT SOUND ...?
AND EVEN NOW, IT'S TOO NARROW-- THEY'LL CRASH INTO IT...
...WHEN THEY TRY TO EXIT!
RRRROARR
OH, NO...
...THEY'RE ALMOST HERE!!
WHOOM

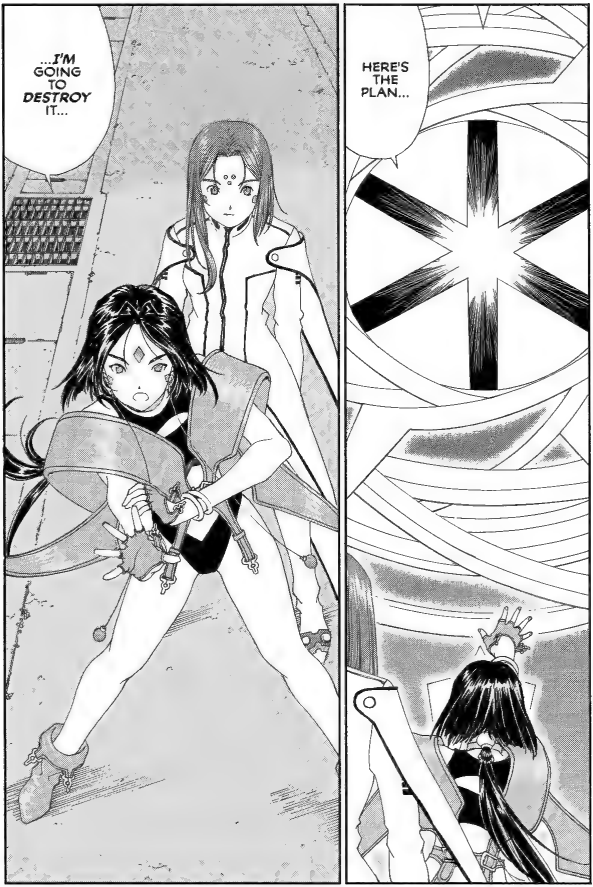
FLASHH
THAT'S IT! THE EXIT!!
D-did I mention...
...that I was going to b-break ...?!
LET'S GO!!
IF ONLY THERE WAS A WAY...
...TO STOP IT FROM REGENERATING.

HOW CAN WE MAKE IT UNABLE TO FIX ITSELF...?
WE DESTROY IT-- IT FIXES ITSELF.
!?
UNABLE TO FIX--
...AND I NEED YOU TO DO WHAT I SAY!!
GOOO

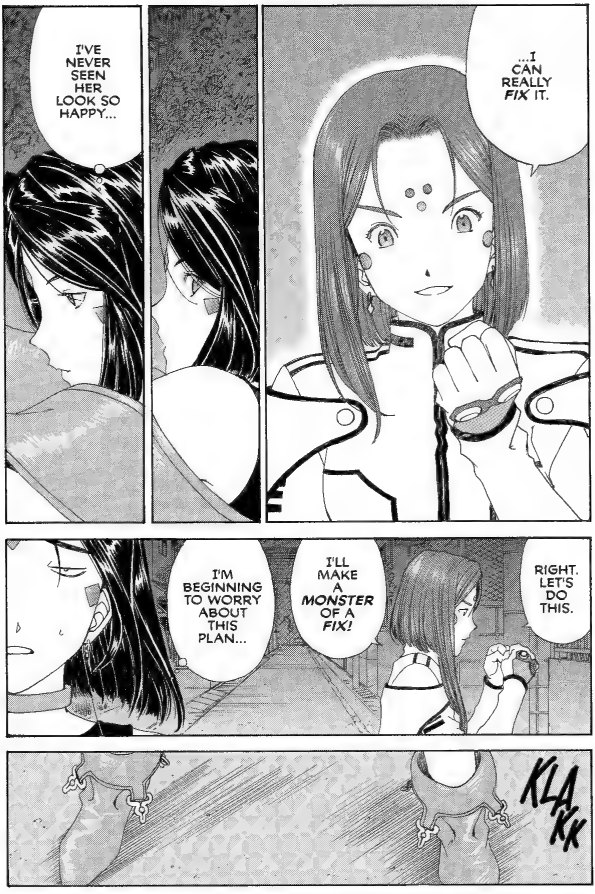
CHAPTER 307

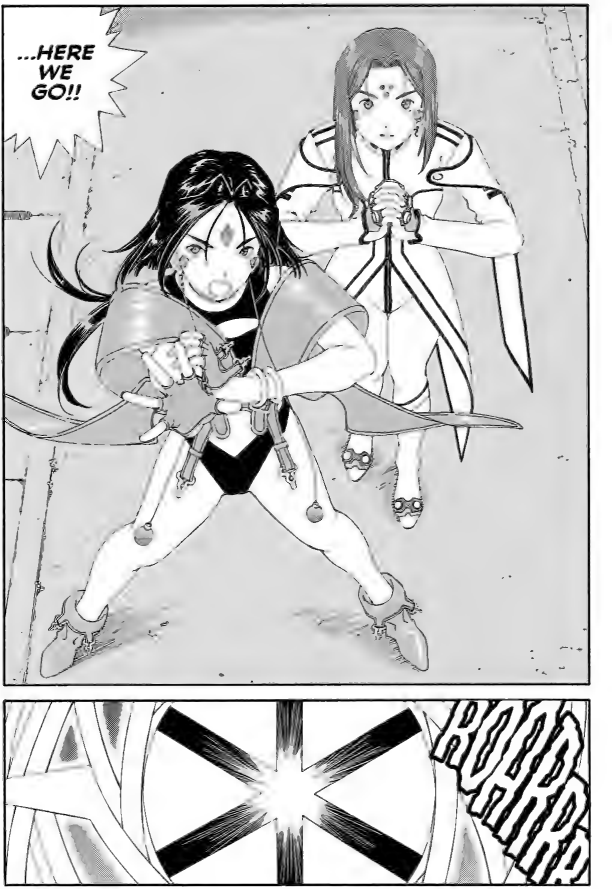
The Strongest Two Who Stayed Behind




...I'M GOING TO DESTROY IT...
HERE'S THE PLAN...

...AND THEN I WANT YOU...
...TO FIX IT.
EH?
FIX IT?
I'M ALLOWED... TO FIX IT?
YES. FIX IT WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT.
WOW...


I'VE NEVER SEEN HER LOOK SO HAPPY...
...I CAN REALLY *FIX* IT.
I'M BEGINNING TO WORRY ABOUT THIS PLAN...
I'LL MAKE A *MONSTER* OF A *FIX!*
RIGHT. LET'S DO THIS.
KLAKK


...HERE WE GO!!
RORR

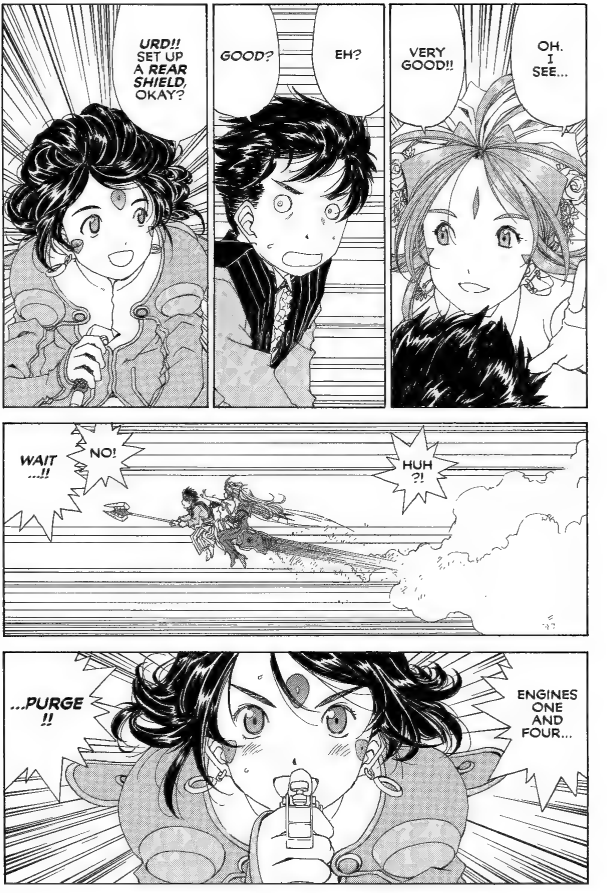
WOOM
I'm going to break...
...I can feel it!!
IT LOOKS...
UH...
HANG ON!! WE'RE ALMOST THERE...

YOU GOTTA GO FASTER!!
I can't...
THE EXIT'S CLOSING!!
IT'S CLOSING !!
...KIND OF... NARROW ...?
...take any more...
WHOOM

WEEWEEW...
Urggg...
SORRY...
...I GUESS IT *COULDN'T* TAKE THE STRAIN.

BUT YOU CAN MAKE REPAIRS ...?
...RIIIIGHT.
IT'D NEED A COMPLETE REBUILD TO GET BACK TO OPERATIONAL...
DON'T BE SILLY. OF COURSE NOT!
HUH?
ANYWAY, I DO HAVE A BACKUP PLAN...
...WHY ARE YOU ALL LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT...?

...SELF-DESTRUCT.
NOT US, DUMMY. THE ENGINES. THEY'VE STILL GOT FUEL IN THEM...
...DE-STRUCT?
SELF...


URD!! SET UP A REAR SHIELD, OKAY?
GOOD?
EH?
VERY GOOD!!
OH. I SEE...
WAIT ...!!
NO!
HUH ?!
...PURGE !!
ENGINES ONE AND FOUR...

GKKNG
GKKWN
SHIELD!!
SELF-DESTRUCT !!
KLIK
VROOO

SHHH
ZOOOM

IT WORKED! WE'RE GOING FASTER AGAIN...
UM...
CAN WE DOWN-SHIFT ON THIS ...?!
...I THINK WE'RE GOING TOO FAST!!!

...IT'LL BE OKAY.
KEIICHI...
BUT WE'RE GONNA COLLIDE--
WE'VE GOT NO WAY TO ACCELERATE AGAIN!
DON'T EVEN TRY TO SLOW DOWN!!
...ARE THE STRONGEST OF US.
THOSE WAITING AT THE EXIT...

Shot-gun...
THE TWO OF THEM...
...Rose !!
ZZZ
DUM

RIGHT!!
NOW!! FIX IT!!
HAAA...

FASHH!
BLAAMM

BUT...
...YOU DID IT PERFECTLY.
AU CONTRAIRE...
...SORRY, I MESSED UP... AGAIN...
OHHH...
LOOK!
...IT'S STILL OPEN!!

W-WAIT...
...IT'S CLOSING AGAIN ...!!
GKKGG
GKK
GRR GRR GRR
IT'S ALL RIGHT!!

...LIND'S REPAIR SPELL CAST UPON YOU NOW OVERRIDES YOUR OWN SELF-REPAIR!
HO HO!! I DUB THEE THE "UN-REPAIRABLE ERROR REPAIR"!!
...
...UM.
...YES! THANKS TO LIND'S TWISTED, MAL-FORMED...
BUT OF COURSE... HEH HEH... THAT SPELL NEVER WORKED QUITE RIGHT!
GKKNGG

WELCOME BACK.
BOOOM!
...WELL THIS IS JUST LIKE US, ISN'T IT...?
Bro_ken...

CHAPTER 308

Stay with Me Forever

Sp
eak
for
your
self
I'M SURPRISED WE MADE IT OUT IN ONE PIECE!
MY MY MY MY
MY MY

...ISN'T THAT THE TYPE NINE PURPLE TREASURE CLASS CEREMONIAL DRESS...?
...SO IT IS! WELL, NOW...
OVER-CAME THE TRIAL, DID YOU?
UM... YEAH.
SOME-HOW.

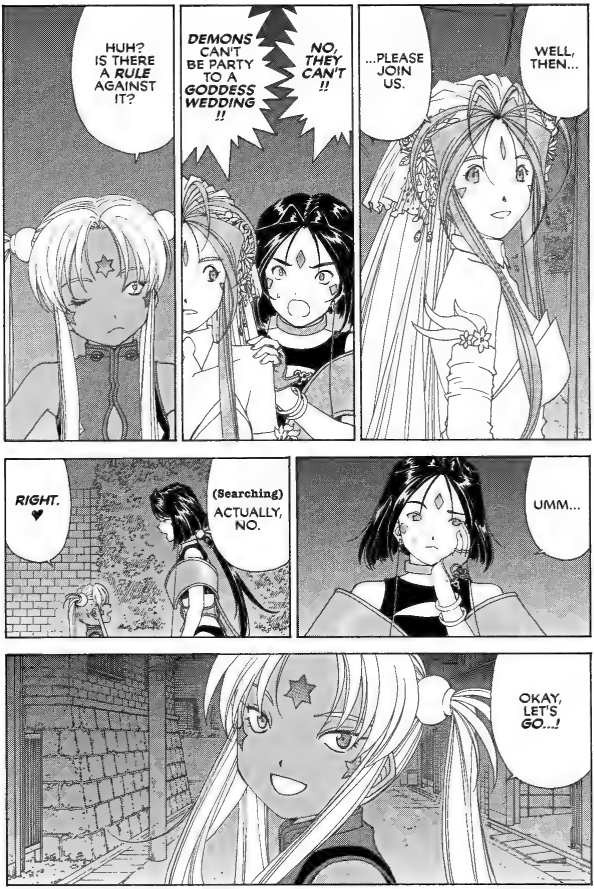
...KEIICHI WOULD BE THE ONE TO MAKE IT.
I THOUGHT...
I NEVER IMAGINED THERE'D BE SOMEONE CAPABLE OF PASSING THE GATE.
I AM NOT.
I'M AMAZED...
SO YOU'RE MARRIED NOW ...?
...ARE RARE INDEED.
SUCH HONEST IDIOTS AS HIM...
WELL, YOU HAVE A POINT.

NO, NOT YET...
...THERE WEREN'T ENOUGH DEITIES FOR THE CEREMONY.
OH, YES. A DIVINE WEDDING...
...NEEDS *FOUR* GODDESSES TO CONDUCT THE SERVICE...
...PLUS A COUPLE OF *WITNESSES*
WELL, NOW WE'VE GOT THE FOUR GODDESSES, ANYWAY.
NOOO!! *I* DON'T *WANNA* HELP BELLDANDY GET MARRIED!!

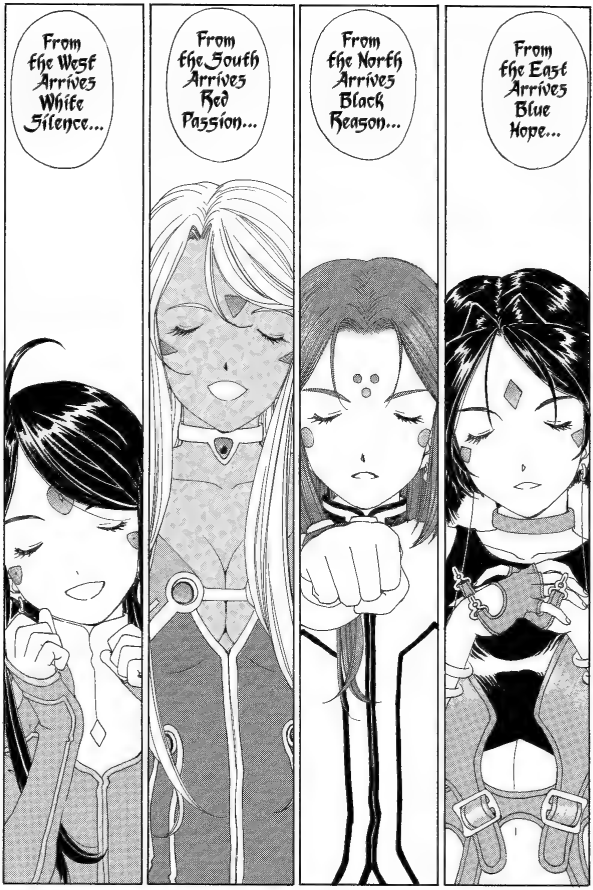
WHY, BELL-DANDY'LL BE SO DARN HAPPY WITH YOU...
...YOU'LL HIT THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE SINGLE-DAY GAIN!
HUH?
HELP OUT HERE, AND YOUR STOCK WITH HER WILL SKYROCKET, YOU KNOW?
...WHAT ARE WE *WAITING* FOR, THEN?!
...I BET SHE'LL EVEN MAKE YOU AN ICE-CREAM CAKE...
AH...
WAIT! WE NEED *WITNESS-ES*...
VERY WELL. LET'S BEGIN THE CEREMONY!

YOU'RE DOING THIS ON PURPOSE, AREN'T YOU?
IT'S NOT THE *KIND* OF ANIMAL.
I DON'T THINK SO.
HOW ABOUT THIS KITTY?
WELL...
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO...?
...HILD!!

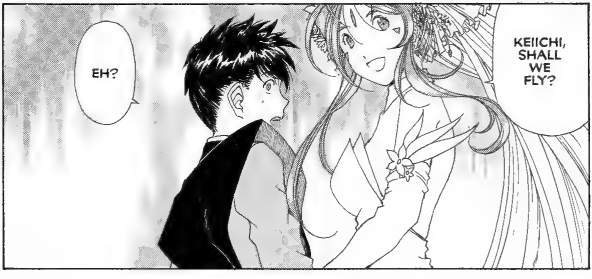
I BELIEVE SOMEONE ASKED FOR TWO WITNESSES ...?
OH, MY.
...YOU MIGHT SAY SHE WENT FLAT OUT.
SHE GOT STOMPED BY THOSE MOO-MOOS, YOU KNOW...
YUP.
YOU WERE ALREADY HERE?
OH, HER?
OH... WHAT HAPPENED TO MARA?


HUH? IS THERE A *RULE* AGAINST IT?
DEMONS CAN'T BE PARTY TO A *GODDESS WEDDING* !!
NO, THEY CAN'T !!
...PLEASE JOIN US.
WELL, THEN...
RIGHT. ♥
(Searching) ACTUALLY, NO.
UMM...
OKAY, LET'S *GO...!*

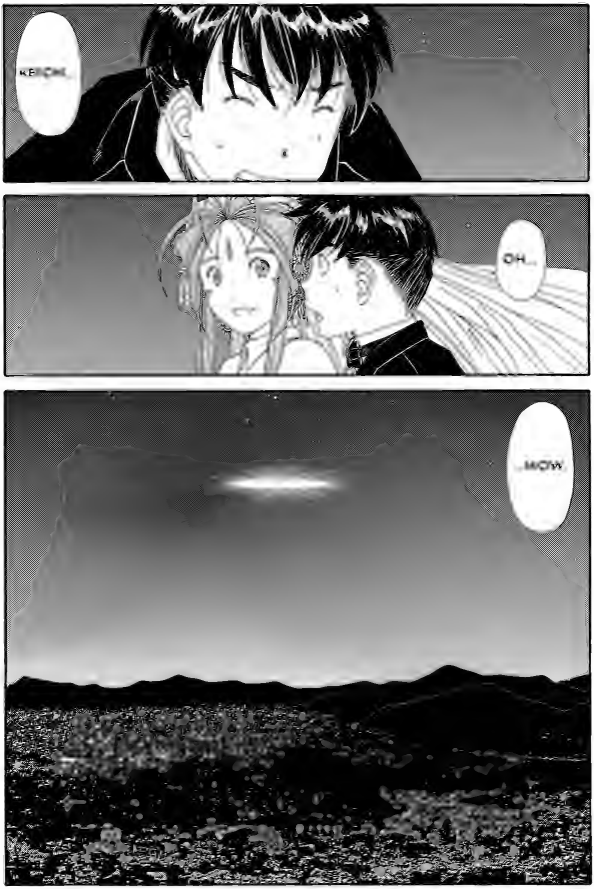
WELL, THAT'S NO PROBLEM...
I'M PRETTY SURE THEY NEED TO ACTUALLY *WITNESS.*
WHILE THE RULE DOES REQUIRE TWO WITNESS-ES...
WAIT, *WAIT.*
Here We Celebrate...
I'LL JUST TILT HER 90 DEGREES!
Zap! Flip!


From the West Arrives White Silence...
From the South Arrives Red Passion...
From the North Arrives Black Reason...
From the East Arrives Blue Hope...

...Golden Love.
In the Center Gathers...


EH?
KEIICHI, SHALL WE FLY?

WAAHH!!
UM...
WOOSH


KEIICHI...
OH...
...MOW

YES.
...WALK WITH *HOPE*?
WILL YOU TWO ALWAYS...
...EACH OTHER WITH *REASON*?
CAN YOU TWO RESPECT...
YES.
YES.
...EACH OTHER WITH *PASSION*?
CAN YOU TWO EMPOW-ER...

YES!
...UNTIL THE TIME FOR *SILENCE?*
CAN YOU TWO BELIEVE EACH OTHER...
...BY *THEIR* SILENCE ...?
AND DO THE WITNESSES CONFIRM ALL THIS...
...

MAY YOU BOTH BE BLESSED.
SHHNGG
SHHNGG
...WOW!

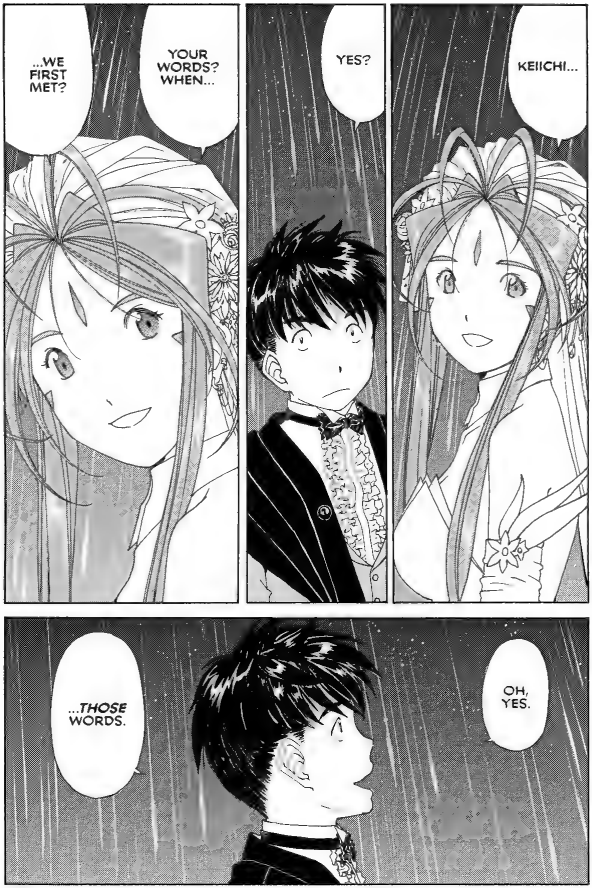
In Green Flickers, then Many Colors, the Road Reaches for the Sky...
The Light Showers, the Breeze Blows...
...The Morning Brings Rain, and the Evening, Storms. Let Us Walk Together.
...The Path Shall Wind through Peaks, in Deep Vales, on Crater Rims...
...Now We See Their Blossoms Strong Against the High Winds.
Trees of Solace Shall Be Our Guideposts, the Leaves Beckon...
...Follow Your Arousal, Follow the Passion of Your Words...
Advance, Advance! A Journey Never Ending...

OH WELL, ER...
AARGH!! I JUST WOKE UP, OKAY?! CAN WE HAVE A LITTLE QUIET INSTEAD OF THIS JOYFUL CHORUS OF SONG?!
...Until All Flowers Shed...
...Until We All Part...
Give Blessing to the Bond...
...Gather Here, Sing Here, All that Wish to Celebrate...
MY ACHING HEAD!!
BE STRONG, MARA DEAR. THEY'RE ALMOST FINISHED.
Flowers, Birds, Wind, and Moon...

...And
Love.

Boom

A bride...
WHA ...?!
HUH...
...Finally you became my bride.
YEAH! YA-HOO!
Now I can sleep in peace.
It was a happy ending.


...WE FIRST MET?
YOUR WORDS? WHEN...
YES?
KEIICHI...
...THOSE WORDS.
OH, YES.

THOSE WERE THE WORDS...
...FOR PROPOSING TO A GODDESS.
EH...?
...EHHH?!
SO PLEASE, KEIICHI...
...LET ME HEAR THEM AGAIN?
SURE.

I WANT A GODDESS LIKE YOU TO BE WITH ME ALWAYS.

Oh My Goddess!

The End

To those who loved
Oh My Goddess!

I am terribly grateful that something I started with no idea it would last so long has been loved by so many of you, enabling me to continue the series for a grand twenty-five years. Every time I finish drawing a character, a feeling of loneliness wells up inside me, because I won't be drawing him or her again. I look forward to entertaining you with my next piece of work.

Kosuke Fujishima

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English-language version
produced by Dark Horse Comics

OH MY GODDESS! Vol. 48
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Well, as promised, it's a happy ending, and I think you'll agree that everyone has earned it—Kosuke Fujishima-sensei above all. In Japanese, chapter 1 of *Oh My Goddess!* first appeared in the November 1988 issue of Kodansha's *Afternoon* magazine; chapter 308, the ending, ran in the June 2014 issue. That's twenty-five years and seven months. In English, chapter 1 of *Oh My Goddess!* first appeared in August 1994 (back when Dark Horse serialized the manga in monthly comic book format); the release date of the book you're reading now is September 30, 2015.

That's twenty-one years and one month. When you consider that the English-language manga industry as we know it today began in 1987 (manga had been published in English before then, but 1987 was when it began to come out here every month on a regular basis), that means *Oh My Goddess!* stretches across three-quarters of that entire history. It is one of the last manga on the North American market that originally began in comic book format (but not the last; Viz's *Vagabond*, still ongoing, began as a comic book in 2001 before shortly thereafter switching to the graphic-novel-only format).

And although the *OMG!* story has concluded, it's too good a story for this to be its last version in print. You may have already seen it in your bookstore, but (as we announced at the Anime Expo 2014 *Oh My Goddess!* panel), we've begun to rerelease *OMG!* from the beginning in omnibus format. The *Oh My Goddess! Omnibus* Book One came out at the end of July and contains vol. 1–3 of the regular edition. There are fifteen *OMG!* omnibus books planned in all. The first few will collect three volumes each, but starting with Book Five, the omnibus will collect runs of chapters instead of volumes; for example, Book Five will have *OMG!* chapters 73–89, Book Six will have chapters 90–104, Book Seven will have chapters 105–124, etc.

You can begin to see the reason for this if you look at the regular editions—notice how big the difference in page count is, for example, between, say, *Oh My Goddess!* vol. 17 and vol. 40. The current Dark Horse edition of OMG! (that is, the unflopped edition that began coming out in 2005) is based directly on the original Japanese *tankobon*, and that same wide variation in page count is in those original books. I don't know for sure why there was such a wide variation in page count over the years (since Fujishima himself worked at a very steady pace, almost always doing one chapter a month), but—as someone who works in publishing—my guess would be that it's because over the quarter century the manga was published

by Kodansha, their own requirements shifted at times.

You've probably noticed how manga *tankobon* will sometimes end right in the middle of a story arc, whereas American graphic novels try to collect complete story arcs. The Japanese approach gives the publisher more flexibility as to when to put the book out. So when a shorter *OMG! tankobon* (like vol. 40) came out, that might have been because they needed one more volume quickly for promotional or scheduling reasons. Just as individuals need to balance their workload, companies are the same. *Oh My Goddess!* ran in *Afternoon* magazine, but there are twenty-five to thirty other manga in *Afternoon*, and *Afternoon* is only one of the manga magazines that Kodansha publishes, so every year they're putting out hundreds of *tankobon*, and I'm quite sure that often means shifting individual books around on the schedule.

Anyway, getting back to our omnibus edition of *Oh My Goddess!*, if, after Book Four, we continued to simply put three regular volumes in every omnibus, the page-count difference would be very noticeable; if that were the plan, Book Six (Japanese vols. 16–18) would be about 708 pages, whereas Book Eleven (Japanese vols. 31–33) would be about 414 pages! But by breaking it up with chapters instead of volumes, we'll be able to keep all the omnibus books much closer in size while trying to have logical story start and end points whenever possible. For example, the final omnibus (Book Fifteen) will begin with chapter 286, when Ansuz shows up to begin the judgment of Keiichi and Belldandy.

Why collect *Oh My Goddess!* as an omnibus? Well, simply put, omnibus editions have become popular in recent years, and we think this is the best format to bring in the next generation of *OMG!* readers. But the omnibus is not simply the previous version bundled together; it's sort of the Blu-ray edition of *OMG!* ^_^ The omnibus uses a larger page size and premium quality paper for both the black-and-white and color art, bringing out Fujishima's work with new clarity. If you've seen Dark Horse's omnibus books of *Cardcaptor Sakura*, the *OMG!* omnibus is similar in format. And at $19.99 per omnibus book, it's also a great bargain. If you want to recommend the series to new readers in the future, I think the *Oh My Goddess!* omnibus is the way to go. From now on they'll be released every four months from Dark Horse, so Book Two is out in November.

That's for the future, but let's get back to the present—as in, the presents for those eleven lucky winners of the Great Goddess Giveaway! We had so many entries, from many parts of the world, but on the evening of June 15, as promised, they all went in a big box, were shaken around, and then were drawn out in this prize order: #1: R. Johannes, #2: M. Schwartz, #3: Y. Ng, #4: L. Robbins, #5: C. Cox, #6: M. Kuhn, #7: T. Nguyen-Vu, #8: M. Seibel, #9: A. Floyd, #10: T. Holm, and #11: N. Goodman. Congratulations to all!

Brian Coussell, correspondent in volumes 15 and 45, wrote in again once more from the United Kingdom. Mr. Coussell's postcard was a reproduction of a wartime poster urging people to use handkerchiefs, as "Coughs and Sneezes

Spread Diseases" (still good advice today, I think, particularly on a plane ^_^), by H. E. Bateman. As a matter of fact, I'm very interested in the history of political and propaganda art, and it was a British book in my high-school library that first introduced me to the subject, *Propaganda: The Art of Persuasion* by Anthony Rhodes. It should probably be read by all *Hetalia* fans. :-) Although the cover of *Propaganda* looks quite sinister, with Hitler raising up a flag, Rhodes has chapters on all the major nations (including Japan) that clashed in World War II and how their cultural understanding influenced their propaganda; he notes that "humour appealed more to Britons than heavy-handed exhortations." You can buy the hardcover of *Propaganda* fairly cheap online; it's full of reproductions of actual posters, film stills, leaflets, and even record albums from the period, and the book is an excellent introduction to the role artists played—sometimes light and funny, sometimes dark and dramatic, sometimes elegant and noble, sometimes ugly and hateful—in trying to influence public opinion during the Second World War.

Mr. Coussell also mentioned that he recognized the font used for the chapter titles in *Oh My Goddess!* as Eckmann (chosen, I believe, in 2005 by the original designer of this edition, Debra Bailey), saying, "It is one of the faces I warn some of the students against trying to use because they always want 'something different,' but whether it is the spell-casting atmosphere and otherworldliness of the goddesses I do not know, but in *OMG!* it looks OK! Just shows, you must not be too dogmatic in design." Well, we're always glad to present alternative views here at Dark Horse Comics! You may be aware that Otto Eckmann is reported as having been influenced by Japanese woodblock prints in his design, so using his typeface in a manga may be said to be an offering in return. Actually, your comment reminds me of our recently published manga *Seraphim 266613336 Wings*, a somewhat obscure work by the extraordinary duo of Mamoru Oshii and Satoshi Kon. The story makes reference both to the Bible and to medieval Christian thought, so I wanted to use something that suggested a black letter font, but not too stereotypically black letter. I ended up using Belwe Condensed; like Eckmann, Georg Belwe was a German designer active in the fin-de-siècle (growing up, that phrase always meant the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, but it occurs to me we must now specify which turn of the century we mean ^_^).

Less about fonts, more about letters. :-)

I have been a reader of *Oh My Goddess!* for over fifteen years. I was first turned on to the series by the anime. After I saw that first episode I said to myself, "Where has this been all my life?!" I read the issues published by Dark Horse and was blown away by the art style, the characters, and the stories. *Oh My Goddess!* was the first comic to really turn me on to manga. In fact, it was *Oh My Goddess!* which turned me on to comics in the first place; American comics never really sparked my interest.

Now that it's ending I would like to thank Fujishima for his manga. It has been an inspiration to me in some of the art I've

drawn, and the stories have captivated me, as well. How the characters solved their problems always surprised me. Their answers to problems were usually not what I'd thought, and their creativity amazed me. Their vibrancy has kept me coming back for years. And their personalities have kept my interest, too.

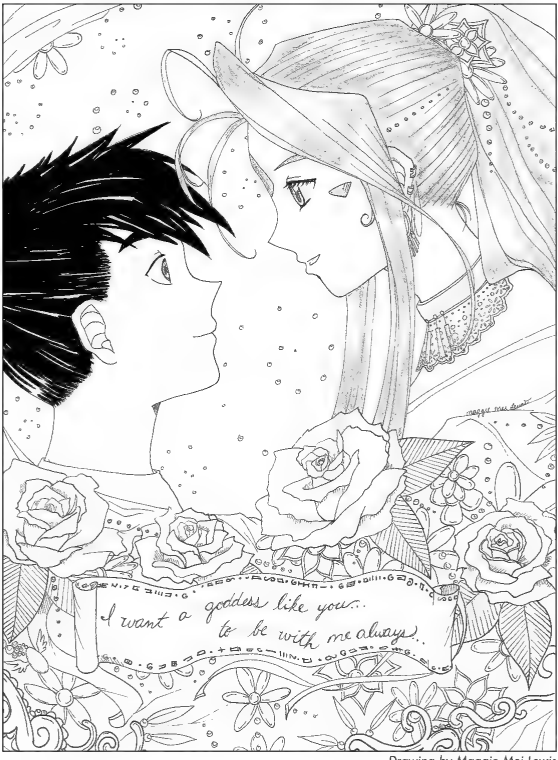
From Keiichi's smarts to Urd's brashness and Peorth's style (which is my favorite), the characters have felt different to me. Though a couple of characters, such as Belldandy, looked like other heroines from other manga, they still had a unique look or feeling to them. It's how Belldandy moved, or how Skuld reacted to Keiichi, that felt real. Also it's the blend of humor, action, and romance that I've loved. It's how Keiichi and Belldandy had a childish romance, or how demons and gods fought for control of the desires of people. Fujishima and company could keep the balance, and keep it fresh, almost each issue.

So thank you, Fujishima, for making a manga that could be understood and loved by so many people.

Sincerely,
Jason Anderson

Peorth calls Keiichi an "honest idiot," but the "idiocy" in this case was thinking he and Belldandy could win against "the logic of Heaven and the human world," as Tyr put it in vol. 46. Keiichi was correct, of course. Maybe his engineering education helped him see that systems and processes can be rethought, reworked, and evolved. And perhaps Whirlwind, where he and Belldandy work together (I'm sure Chihiro expects them back at work in the morning!), is a small metaphor for the issue: the vehicles in the shop are the products of systems, with a built-in design, mass produced and much alike (just as people are), but the shop's workers can make repairs and modifications to the vehicles beyond the original system (just as people can also be individuals) and use what they learn to make new designs beyond the original system. The tool, whether physical, spiritual, or intellectual, has to remain engaged with the machine.

I'm not sure Tyr truly understands his son-in-law yet (still thinking that Keiichi would desire godhood), but I do give Belldandy's father credit for a certain graciousness about what might be humiliating as well as heartbreaking—the fact that a mortal was able to do what he could not and pass the test. The same credit should of course be extended to Hild as well, who presides over the marriage as a witness, in a ceremony where the divine, demonic, and mortal worlds all unite to play a part. I think this is a hopeful as well as happy note to end the series on; if a mortal can beat the system, perhaps there's something false about the system and its divisions in the first place. Urd is the daughter of the ruler of the demon world yet identifies as a goddess (she and Hellboy should go drinking sometime!); Belldandy is the daughter of the ruler of the divine world yet wants to live in the mortal realm (I liked how she thanked not only her goddess friends and family, but good old Tamiya, Otaki, and Hasegawa as well). Even Skuld has grown to the point where she can be bribed to support the wedding merely with the prospect of an ice-cream cake. ^_^



Drawing by Maggie Mei Lewis

A fan writes in from that most *Oh My Goddess!* of towns: Brooklyn!

Now that our twenty-year manga journey is drawing to a close, I recall how *OMG!* products have always cheered me up over all that time. For example, back very early in that adventure, the OAVs came out—on cassette in those days—and I watched them for the first time when I was by myself on

my birthday, as often happened. Imagine how special I felt when the "countdown" and happy story ending in Keiichi's world coincided on that same day in mine—on Christmas Eve (I would see my family the next day).

Love and congrats to all involved, and to all my fellow travelers. I guess the only thing to do after the next issue will be to start reading once again from the beginning. Finally, thank you to Fujishima-sensei, and best of luck on your next project—after a long vacation!

Charley Elsden

Thank you, Charley! Dark Horse is located just south of Portland, OR, and it's come to our attention that the *New York Times* sometimes compares Portland to Brooklyn. We're more like top of the food-cart chain, if you ask me. And here's a letter with some advice that may prove useful for certain of our Goddess Giveaway winners:

So sad to hear we're at the other end of *Oh My Goddess!* I'd prefer to still be in the middle, but Fujishima has other plans. At least it's the ending he gave it, as opposed to other authors who passed away before writing the end for their stories.

I was wondering if you were doing anything special for the forty-eighth and sadly last book of *Oh My Goddess!* manga, and I see in the back of vol. 47, you indeed are. I've sent in a postcard in the hopes I get selected for one of the treasures shown. Preferably, one of the CD-ROMs or one of the Japanese DVDs. I have the skills required to make full use of those items. Just ask me sometime about how I pulled the *Wedding Peach* screen saver (ultrarare item!) off five Japanese-formatted 1.2 MB floppy disks. I've also collected other "old software" screen savers for *Kaitou Saint Tail* and *Mizuiro Jidai*.

You are close on the fact that people could play Japanese Region 2 DVDs in their computers with VLC. But what you didn't mention (or maybe you didn't know) is that computer DVD drives come from the factory set to Region 0 but will change their region setting based on which region-coded DVD you throw in it. Also, this region setting will change if you use other region-coded DVDs with the drive, but this region-change feature is limited. In other words, you could end up with a Region 2 DVD drive that you'll have to send back to the manufacturer to have cleared.

However, at least for native Windows users (no virtual machines, as I can't guarantee those will work right), SlySoft makes something called AnyDVD. There is a trial version that will run for twenty-one days. AnyDVD will emulate those other-region DVD drives based on the region-coded DVD you put in the drive while also preventing your drive's region code from being set. It also does an on-the-fly decryption of your DVD as well as copy-protection removal so you can straight off copy the files from your DVD to your computer's hard drive and *then* play them with VLC or convert them to whatever compressed video file format you prefer, such as MP4.

But I'm sure most people wouldn't want to stop just there. If they also have a DVD-writer drive on their system, SlySoft also offers CloneDVD. This works in tandem with AnyDVD in that it will read the files on the

DVD and allow you to burn a disk without all the problems of the original (like removing Macrovision), which allows the owner of a Region 2 DVD to have their own private Region 0 backup copy for everyday use. I recommend burning at 4X on Verbatim DVD+R media. "Minus R" media isn't as compatible.

If you've already pulled the files off using AnyDVD, CloneDVD will write from preexisting DVD files as well.

I didn't want to sound like a commercial for SlySoft, but I speak from experience that these two pieces of software will work quite well for Windows people. Users of other operating systems will have to do their own research. And as always—technically, nobody will condone the use of this software to make illegal copies of DVDs you don't personally and physically own. You are allowed to make a working backup copy, and this info is precisely for that purpose.

I hope you will think about including this note with this info for those lucky Region 2 Japanese DVD winners so they can get the most from their treasures.

Maybe now you can talk to Fujishima and get him to let Dark Horse publish *You're Under Arrest!* in its entirety at last!! Eight issues was not enough.

Andrew Floyd
CompTIA A+ Certified IT Tech

"But I'm sure most people wouldn't want to stop just there . . ." Yes, but we must; this is the final volume. ^_^ Actually, I was aware of the issue that computer DVD drives typically come with a limited number of region shifts allowed. With a Mac, it's five, before the drive locks into whatever region was last used. But this only occurs if one uses Apple's built-in DVD Player program; when using a third-party program like VLC, it bypasses the region locking. (This is only a problem for North Americans when trying to play Japanese DVDs, as opposed to trying to play Japanese Blu-rays, which are in the same region as North American Blu-rays. Except Macs don't support Blu-rays, ha ha.) Anyway, it's a little irritating for the user when we're talking about—as we are here—trying to play perfectly legitimate, licensed DVDs from another region. North American anime fans in the 1980s and '90s were lucky that these issues didn't arise when trying to play Japanese-import VHS or laser discs; we were also, of course, lucky that Japan and North America shared the same TV-broadcast format, NTSC. European fans who use PAL will know what I'm talking about. ^_^ Speaking of which:

Hi, everyone. I just wanted to say how much I have loved *Oh My Goddess!*, as it saddens me that it must come to an end. I know you've published my letters in the past, and it meant a great deal to me to know that you read them. I just wanted to write to say goodbye to you guys. It's funny; it's like saying goodbye to an old friend, as you and *Oh My Goddess!* have been with me for a long time. I started reading and watching *Oh My Goddess!* about seven years ago (yep, a late starter, LOL), but in that time so much has happened in my life (found my own Belldandy, heh, got married, and had a family), and I am glad that this story was part of that. I believe Belldandy will always be my favorite character out of any manga.

I thought you guys might like the picture I've sent of the three goddesses that sit on my shelf.

Thank you again for publishing this amazing work and story—one that I believe will be part of my life always.

All the best,
Chris Cox
England

Thank you! Another pal from a land of PAL ^_^ writes in below:

I had been reading manga awhile before I discovered how good a manga *OMG!* was (maybe in 2008?). The first six I bought in English from Titan Books, in a well-known Danish comic shop. I continued with the unflopped edition from Dark Horse. Some I could not get ahold of, so I bought those volumes in Swedish. It was fun to compare the translations.

I especially like the amazing and highly detailed drawings of the characters and the machinery. One of the things I like about the manga are the small stories, like those with Banpei and Sigel. Will they be normal again? I hope they will.

Tommas Holm
Brondby
Denmark

Drawing by Tommas Holm

***Tusind tak*, Tommas! Denmark is a very fine country, both in the past and today; I grew up hearing stories about Danish heroism during World War II. Martha Schwartz, whom we heard from in vol. 30, writes in one more time:**

To all at Dark Horse,

I wanted to take this time and opportunity to thank you for all you have accomplished over the years of printing my favorite comic book. I have seen a lot of great things over the years from your company. I even remember the items you made for the TMNT when they were out in the '80s! It's come a long way, and I am glad to be part of the history. What I really want to do here

is thank you for publishing a book that has changed my life and, well, overall personality. I think that if it were not for what you have done, I would not be this happy and thankful in all my time on earth!

Let me start at the beginning. You may remember me from several comics you published in the past, as I sent many pieces of fan art and letters to your company. My first picture was featured in *Terrible Master Urd*, issue 1 of 6. I did a picture of *You're Under Arrest!* way back in 1996! I was so happy to see my work published, and oh man, I am fascinated by how much my work has changed—yet remained the same—over the years. I have done more than that along the way and am so grateful for the fact that you published almost every picture I sent! A big thank-you for that.

But the one comic that really played a big and important part in my life is issue 1 of 2 of *Miss Keiichi*. Belldandy graces the cover, surrounded by sunflowers. What a nice cover, too, and I got a wall scroll of the same image (funny story to share about that later). Anyway, in that issue I drew a picture of Urd on a dark horse. Inspired by one of Fujishima's covers, of course, but why not add your logo into the picture? Glad it was awe inspiring. Well, I finally put my address into the mix, and you printed it. That was over eighteen years ago, I believe. I made a lot of good friends through it. Made more as the chains went on, and one of those pals wrote me from Canada. I remember the letter very well, as it had a snail sticker on it, saying, *hope you like snail mail*. It was a letter from Arnold Schwartz.

I found his letters thrilling, and that little sticker was so nice. I started collecting tons of stickers thanks to that, BTW. I have a huge box of stickers now! We soon started to chat about *OMG!* and the characters. We related to each one and talked about our favorites. Then, as time went on, our letters progressed. We became very close friends. I was so happy to get mail from a lot of friends I'd made, but his letters really meant a lot. We shared more than just comics. We shared our hopes, our dreams and aspirations. He became a very good friend, more like a best friend.

Soon letters became phone calls, and I don't have to tell you how hard the bills became. We didn't have Skype back then, and the Internet was just like letters. We used phone cards. Oh, how I remember those phone cards. It cost so much to make a call from Regina, SK, Canada, to Orlando, FL, and vice versa, but all throughout the late '90s we called each other and shared a lot over the phone. We spent many hours on the phone. It was as if either he or I had called the Goddess Hotline, because soon we revealed our feelings for each other.

I remember how hard it was to tell him how much I loved him. It was weird, because I fell in love with him before I'd even seen his picture. I remember how shy and embarrassed I was to even see his picture, but he was a nice guy at heart and I felt very strongly about him. When I saw his picture, I knew he was indeed the person I'd seen from the inside. I fell in love with the friend I'd made, the person I talked to every night over the phone (just to keep the costs down). Then we planned to visit. After we made a commitment to each other, the distance became hard. Very hard, and we planned trips to see one another.

The first time, he came to visit me. I remember how hard it was for our first visit. Not only was I nervous, but he was caught in such a bad storm that they could not even land the plane! But they finally did, and we got to meet. We took him to a Perkins restaurant. Because it was so late, we took him to his hotel, and as nervous as we were, it was a nice visit from the first day to the last. I'd finally met my best friend. We had fun as I showed him around the parks at Walt Disney World (I am employed there even to this day). It was a nice opportunity to get to know him, and the final day was when we sealed the deal. We had a nice kiss to remember our time together before he had to leave.

We continued our visits at least a couple more times, but then it was time to make it official. He did not want to leave, and I did not want him to go. We had to make a bigger decision, and we finally did. In the year 2000 we decided to get married. I didn't know how challenging it would be to marry a Canadian. He decided to move here because of job opportunities, even though we had to wait for his green card to be approved. But on August 21, 2000, we got married. It was official, and we were a couple.

The funny story about that wall scroll is that I had it hanging in a room I shared with my sisters, and the best man at my wedding saw the image, and ended up putting on the back of my car the message, "Oh my Goddess, we're married." We've had a lot of struggles; it hasn't been easy. Bills, mortgages, loans, school, his mother's death, dealing with family on both sides. You name it, just as in any other relationship, we've dealt with it. As hard as it was and still is, overall he has been my Keiichi in life. He has been the friend I always wanted. He has been there for me through thick and thin. Through the laughter and the tears. He has been faithful to me, as I have been to him. We never did have a family, but our cat puts us to the test every day!

I found my best friend and if it weren't for Dark Horse, Letters to the Enchantress, and *OMG!* . . . I would never have found him. Thanks to Urd being on that dark horse, I found my best friend!! Now that *OMG!* is ending, I am quite sad. Ironically they marry fifteen years after we did, but they do it. Even if Keiichi had to do it by proving himself, he really worked hard at it, as I felt we did the same. Although the series is over, it will *not* be forgotten. It has done so much in my life, as an artist, a dreamer, a friend, a lover, or what have you; *OMG!* has been my inspiration! Dark Horse, Kosuke Fujishima, Toren Smith, Studio Proteus, *Afternoon* magazine, and everyone out there in the *OMG!* world mean so much to me. I found the one person in my life that gave me happiness. That made my world complete. I found a greater thing in life, and that is very important to me. I learned so much!! Thank you, one thousand times. I wish I could send this message to Fujishima himself. If there is a way, can you please do this for me? I want him to know that he has really changed a life. His story came true indeed, and for that I am grateful.

I am not sending any art with this, although I did draw a nice close-up of Belldandy on the postcard I sent for the contest. I just wanted to write this because no matter how much art I sent, nothing

could describe what I wanted to reveal here in this letter! I still continue with my art. I am now a caricature artist and freelancer! I am not the best artist out there, but I love to share my pictures with the world! Your letter section gave me the confidence to do that, and for that I am just as appreciative!

I *know* I won't win the contest, and I am definitely not asking for any favors (although I am keeping my fingers crossed for that signed comic he did; I would love to have an autograph from my hero)! I think I already got the best gift! I just want to thank everyone over there for helping to make my life what it is today. Belldandy may be gone, but she is not forgotten. Just married, happy, and grateful. I too am happy indeed.

I will always follow Dark Horse and will always be there as a fan! You have made my life special, and I thank you!!

Sincerely and always!!
Martha Schwartz
Schwmartz Web Graphics

As longtime readers will know, when Martha talks about things such as "*Terrible Master Urd*, issue 1 of 6," she's referring to the first decade of Dark Horse's edition of *Oh My Goddess!*, when it was published as a monthly comic book before being collected into graphic novels. Just as is the typical practice with American comic books, it would be released by story arc—so the six chapters of *Terrible Master Urd* were released as six comic book issues. In our current *tankobon* edition of *Oh My Goddess!*, this story arc is chapters 34 through 39; as half of these appear in vol. 5 and half in vol. 6, it goes back to what I said earlier about how Japanese graphic novels don't always go by story arcs.

We've heard from the readers, but of course, among the people who have been associated the longest with *Oh My Goddess!* are those who've worked to adapt it into English. Its letterer and retouch artist, the incredible Susie Lee, writes:

I was told over and over again how this series ends, but it didn't seem real until I saw Belldandy's wedding dress! Wow, this is it. After nearly three hundred chapters of chaste affection, the shy young man who could barely hold Belldandy's hand without blushing actually kissed her. Two volumes later, he marries her. When Keiichi makes up his mind, he moves fast!

I've been lettering *Oh My Goddess!* for twenty years, and I'm so thankful for the opportunity to help share the story of Keiichi and the goddesses. This is the first ongoing series I was given to letter by myself instead of as an assistant, and I've thoroughly enjoyed these stories. To be honest, sometimes I got a little distressed when I had to retouch the *DUMMY*s that Skuld used to throw on people's faces, but that was okay because it was Skuld!

I want to thank a bunch of people: Carl, Philip, Tim, Mike, Rachel, Dave, and all the other editors that have worked with me on this series directly or indirectly, Betty and Andy for helping me get things done closer to deadline, and of course Tom Orzechowski for teaching me how it's done and having faith that I could do this on my own. And very special appreciation goes to Toren Smith for championing *Oh My*

Goddess! from the get-go. It was a crazy, bumpy ride for me in the beginning, and he watched over me, making sure things all worked out smoothly. I sometimes wonder if he is watching still.

Thank you, Susie, for making the English adaptation of *Oh My Goddess!* so elegant. The series has been fortunate to have been adapted to English by someone with your aesthetic sensitivity. From the idiosyncratic fonts of guest characters, to the crazy signage of the campus festivals, to the dynamic reexpression of the sound effects, Susie has understood (as Toren did) that a translated manga is not just a manga plus a translation. Every bit of English you place on the page is a visual element; you see the text, just as you see the art. I am fairly certain that with her two decades on *OMG!*, Susie holds the record in the English-language world for the person who's worked the longest on the same manga. And that is appropriate, because I feel that she has truly engaged with Fujishima's work.

By the way, I've never explained to you all before how *I* first got into *Oh My Goddess!*, have I? It's not quite so uplifting, but at least it befits me, as it's a very Gen-X story. Today it's expected to have dances at anime cons, but in 1994 it was a relatively new idea, and I wanted to set one up at Anime Expo, which had just moved to Southern California from its original home in the Bay Area. It was literally less than 1/40 of the size it is today—only two thousand attendees, so things were a bit more freeform when it came to organizing the programming. I mean, it must have been, because my idea was *Planet Otaku no Video* (named for GAINAX's *Otaku no Video* naturally, recently Kickstarted for Blu-ray by AnimEigo—check it out). It was to be an anime music video dance party, just like Downtown Julie Brown on *Club MTV*. I told you this was a Gen-X story. ^_^"

Anyway, an AMV dance party obviously required AMVs, and for the event we wanted to make a whole bunch of new ones based on what we were listening to at the time. James, White Zombie, Pearl Jam, Beastie Boys, Cypress Hill, Ministry, Pop Will Eat Itself—I think you get the idea. Some of the videos were put together by me, and some by others, including a friend of mine from college, John. He was into a five-episode original anime video series that had just come out the year before, entitled *Aa megami-sama*. In particular, he liked the third episode, "Burning Hearts on the Road." He also liked Beck, whose first hit single (also from 1993!) was "Loser," and something about the song's line "I'm a driver, I'm a winner—things are gonna change, I can feel it!" made him think of the anime's protagonist, one Keiichi Morisato. I must say, those Gen-X instincts proved right in the end!

I'm envious that the longtime translator of *Oh My Goddess!*, Dana Lewis, knew Toren Smith so much better than I did, and I'm also grateful to Dana for all she's done since the 1980s (and all she continues to do!) to bring manga to the English-speaking world. There isn't much I can do to say thank you, Dana, other than to leave you the last word—you, who have for so long brought us Fujishima-sensei's words.

Being a bit of a digital pack rat, it's easy to track down when I first joined the *Oh My Goddess!* gang. Here it is, buried deep in my folder of old manga-translation files passed down across generations of NEC, Tandy, Toshiba, and Apple computers and laptops, the smoking gun:

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Last modified: March 31, 1996.

1996! That's nineteen *years* ago! By March 1996 I had already worked on a lot of titles for Studio Proteus and Dark Horse Comics: *Appleseed*, *Gunsmith Cats*, *Domu*, *Outlanders* . . . a lot. But when Toren Smith, Studio Proteus's founder and one of my best friends in the world, asked if I would take over *Oh My Goddess!*, I hesitated.

After all, *OMG!* was already being translated, and by none other than the inimitable Alan Gleason, part of the Project Gen team that had translated *Barefoot Gen*, Keiji Nakazawa's classic manga memoir of the bombing of Hiroshima, the first Japanese manga to be published in English by a US publishing house, way back in 1976. Alan (who these days plays a wicked standing bass in multiple Tokyo jazz bands) and Toren already had the English-language voices of Keiichi, Bell, Urd, Skuld, and the vast supporting cast of *OMG!* down pat. But Alan was ready to return to his other, weightier translation work. A new translator was needed. And the goddesses certainly looked like . . . fun!

I told Toren yes. And we were off . . .

It never occurred to any of us back then that Fujishima-*sensei* might have another *forty-two* books' worth of plot complications up his sleeve before he would finally let Bell and Keiichi get hitched. Nor how much more depth, sophistication, and tenderness he would bring to a story line that started out as a slapstick campus love comedy and has since evolved into something so much more profound. Lea Hernandez joined the translation team along the way. And finally the lead translator title passed to my son Chris (translator of *3x3 Eyes* and *Shadow Star*, among others) as my day job got out of control. As the third series translator, Chris added an instinctive feel for the meta layer of deep J-pop jokes and parodies infusing *OMG!* that only a native speaker raised in the heart of manga culture could spot. But right to the end I kept one fingertip in the process to see that the voices and traditions launched by Toren and Alan way back at the beginning continued unbroken. Right up until . . . seven days ago? Eight? When we sent the final chapter of the book you're holding in your hands right now to Carl Horn, the mighty übereditor of the *Oh My Goddess!* three-ring circus.

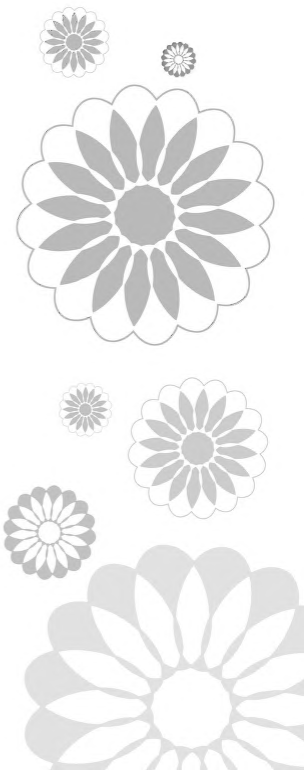
Hrmm . . . more than a week now without *OMG!* A week without musing about how to take the wonderfully complex personalities of the goddesses, Keiichi, and the rest of Fujishima's cast of fabulously rich characters out of the equally rich Japanese language and into English. Having worked as a translator since the 1980s, I've learned the hard way that there's no such thing as a direct, one-to-one correspondence between any two languages, and all the more so when one of them is Japanese. But for the two decades since the first English-language *OMG!* episode came out in August

1994, all of us who have been lucky enough to work on *Oh My Goddess!* have done our best to capture in English the words, personalities, quirks, and boundless spirit of the goddesses and all their friends and frenemies with the same bounce and wit that Fujishima-sensei has imbued them with week after week, decade after decade, in the pages of Kodansha's *Afternoon* magazine.

Sadly, Toren didn't live to see the end of the series he brought to English-language readers so many years ago. The publication of this final volume of *OMG!*, following on the last volume of Dark Horse's *Blade of the Immortal* last April, means that for the first time since *Outlanders* began in 1988, there will be no new volume of a Dark Horse book coming out that Toren and Studio Proteus had a hand in launching. So for me, saying goodbye to Bell, Keiichi, and the goddesses is also a farewell to those crazy, hair-raising, and exhilarating early days of huddling with Toren in cheap Tokyo cafés, banging on the doors of Japanese publishers and manga artists, and hammering out translations late into the night at the start of the first English manga boom. *Oh My Goddess!* has been a bridge from those humble beginnings to today's amazing global manga culture, with all its talented creators, translators, editors, letterers, and impossibly well-informed and devoted readers.

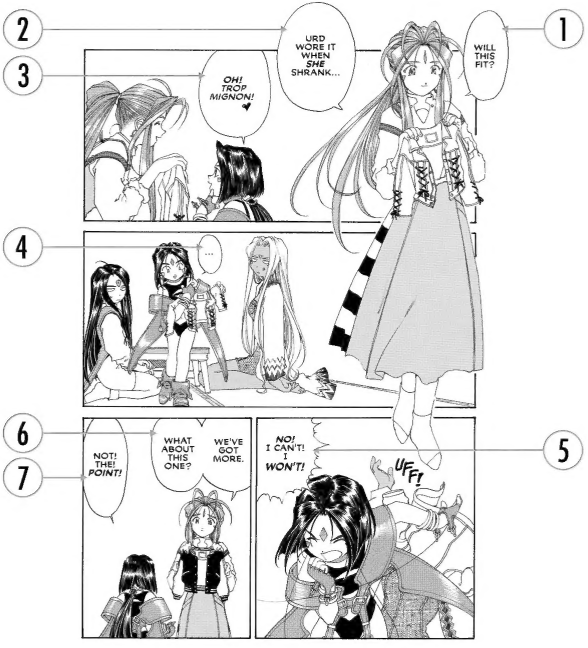
I hope that now and then—when he isn't too busy with new projects—Fujishima-sensei will drop in to visit with Bell, Keiichi, Urd, Skuld, and the crew again and let us know how they're all getting along. Just for old times' sake.

After all, readers and editors and letterers and fan artists, cosplayers, figure painters, fanfic writers, and yup, translators alike—we've been their friends for a very long time.



STOP! This is the back of the book!

This manga collection is translated into English, but arranged in right-to-left reading format to maintain the artwork's visual orientation as originally drawn and published in Japan. If you've never read comics this way before, take a look at the diagram below to give yourself an idea of how to go about it. Basically, you'll be starting in the upper right-hand corner, and will read each word balloon and panel moving right to left. It may take a little getting used to, but you should get the hang of it very quickly. Have fun! If this is the millionth manga you've read this way, never mind. ^_^



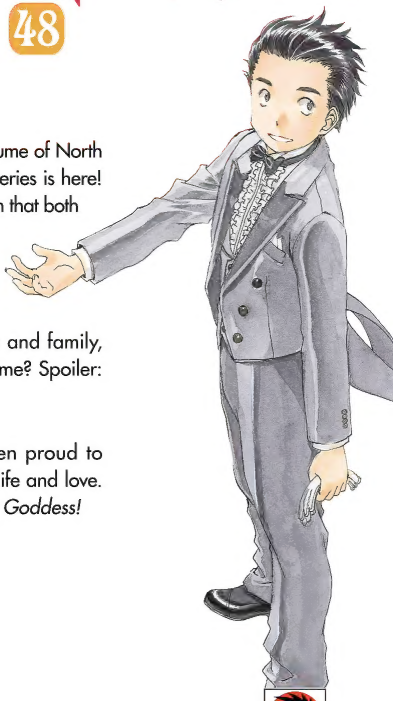
Oh My Goddess!

ああっ女神さまっ 48

THE FINAL VOLUME!

After twenty-one years, the final volume of North America's longest-running manga series is here! Having won every test and tribulation that both Heaven and Hell could throw at them, only one challenge now remains for Keiichi and Belldandy—to get back to Earth for their wedding! Even with the help of their friends and family, can they cross the dimensions in time? Spoiler: it's a happy ending!

Since 1994, Dark Horse has been proud to publish Kosuke Fujishima's epic of life and love. Thank you to all the fans of *Oh My Goddess!*



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